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ST. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE ON THE INSPIRATION AND CANONICITY OF SCRIPTURE

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE SACRED SCIENCES AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORATE IN THEOLOGY

BY THE

REV. CHARLES JOSEPH COSTELLO, S.T.L.

OF THE FIRST AMERICAN PROVINCE OF THE OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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1930

Nihil obstat:

GULIELMUS W. NOONAN, O. M. I., D. C. L.

Imprimi potest:

TERENTIUS W. SMITH, O. M. I., D. D.

Nihil obstat:

FRANCISCUS J. CÖLN, PH. D.,
Censor deputatus.

Imprimatur:

✠ MICHAEL J. CURLEY, D. D.,
Archiepiscopus Baltimorensis.

TO

HIS GRACE, THE MOST REVEREND AUGUSTIN DONTENWILL,

ARCHBISHOP OF PTOLEMAIS,

AND

SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE,

ON THE

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

AND THE FIFTEENTH CENTENARY OF HIS

ILLUSTRIOUS NAMESAKE

UNIVERSITAS CATHOLICA AMERICAE
WASHINGTONII, D. C.
S. FACULTAS THEOLOGICA 1929–1930
No. 33.

PREFACE

In the long list of writings composed by St. Augustine, one looks in vain for a treatise devoted to the subjects of the inspiration and canonicity of Scripture. These important topics, however, did not fail to engage his attention, as is apparent from the numerous passages concerning them, which are to be found scattered throughout his voluminous writings. The aim of this dissertation has been to gather all such references from his authentic works, and from them to present his teaching on the subjects of the inspiration and canonicity of Scripture. The absence of any such study up to the present may be considered sufficient justification for this monograph.

In the preparation of this study hundreds of references concerning the subject matter were gathered. All of them, however, were not of the same value, and only the more characteristic have been utilized in the following pages.

The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first contains St. Augustine's teaching on the existence, nature and extent of inspiration. The second, embraces his doctrine regarding the Canon of Scripture.

The quotations from St. Augustine's works are taken from the Benedictine edition of his writings, as published by Migne, 1861. Wherever a reading was doubtful, it has been compared with the critical edition of St. Augustine's works published by the Vienna Academy. Very few variants, however, occur, and those which do are of minor importance.

Many of the works of St. Augustine have been translated into English by Philip Schaff, in his *Select Library of the Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Church.* This translation has been found helpful, and some of the quotations given in English in this study have been adopted from it. Where greater literalness was desired an independent translation has been given. In every instance in which Schaff's translation has been followed, it has been diligently compared with the original.

The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to his pro-

fessors, the Reverend Doctors Franz J. Cöln, Professor of Old Testament Scripture, and Heinrich Schumacher, Professor of New Testament Scripture, at the Catholic University, who so kindly assisted and directed him in this study.

He also wishes to thank his Religious Superiors for having given him the opportunity of pursuing higher studies at the Catholic University.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE vii

INTRODUCTION xi

PART I

INSPIRATION

CHAPTER I. EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF INSPIRATION 3

§ I. The Fact of Inspiration 3

§ II. St. Augustine's Concept of Inspiration 6

1. *The part of God in inspiration* 6

2. *The part of man in inspiration* 17

CHAPTER II. EXTENT OF INSPIRATION 29

§ I. Extent of Inspiration in General 29

§ II. The Inerrancy of Scripture 30

1. *Scripture is not only true, but it is impossible for it to be false or contradictory* 30

2. *Controversy with St. Jerome* 38

3. *The truth of Scripture quotations* 42

4. *In recording sinful deeds Scripture does not approve of sin* 43

§ III. History in the Bible 45

1. *Absolute truth of the historical statements in general* 45

2. *Historical character and truth of Genesis.* 46

3. *The literal and typical truth of Scripture.* 49

4. *Literary forms in Scripture* 52

§ IV. The Bible and Science 57

PART II

CANONICITY

CHAPTER III. ST. AUGUSTINE'S CANON OF SCRIPTURE 65

CHAPTER IV. ST. AUGUSTINE'S CONCEPT OF A CANONICAL BOOK .. 71

CHAPTER V. ST. AUGUSTINE'S CRITERION OF CANONICITY 77

CHAPTER VI. St. Augustine's Attitude Towards the Deutero-Canonical Books of the Old Testament..... 87

ABBREVIATIONS 99

BIBLIOGRAPHY 101

INDEX 107

INTRODUCTION

A study of what St. Augustine has written on any point of doctrine is always of interest and importance owing to the prominent position which he holds in the Church as doctor and theologian. His orthodoxy is unquestioned, and he is ever the champion of the ancient faith. In tribute to him, St. Jerome says, that "the Catholics look up to him and venerate him as the restorer of the ancient faith, and that the heretics hate him." [1] An examination of his doctrines is particularly appropriate during the current year of 1930, because it marks the fifteenth centenary of his death. Consequently an investigation of his teaching on the subjects of the inspiration and canonicity of Scripture takes on an added interest.

In a life of intense activity for the welfare of the Church, St. Augustine found time to devote his great talents to the study, exposition, and defense of Sacred Scripture. His wide acquaintance with the Scriptures is evident to every student of his writings. So extensive was his use of Scripture, that one could reconstruct from his works alone more than two-thirds of the Bible.[2] His labors and ability in Scriptural matters did not pass unnoticed in his own day, but drew upon him the recognition of the Bishops of the Councils of Numidia and Carthage,[3] who assigned to him as a special duty the study of Scripture, in order that he might render still greater service to the Church as the expounder and champion of the Sacred Writings.

This task St. Augustine was only too happy to accept, but he was often hindered from performing it by the importunities of the faithful under his charge who broke in upon the time reserved by him for study. The interruptions became so frequent that he was obliged to complain of them to the people.

[1] *Catholici te conditorem antiquae rursum fidei venerantur atque suspiciunt, et . . omnes haeretici detestantur.* Ep. 195; P. L. 33, 891.

[2] Vigouroux, F., D. B. *Augustin*, vol. 1, 1240.

[3] Ep. 213, 5; P. L. 33, 967.

It was agreed between you and me that no one should intrude on me for five days each week, that I might discharge the duty in the study of Scripture, which my brethren and fathers, the co-bishops, were pleased to assign to me in the two Councils of Numidia and Carthage. . . For a short time the agreement was kept by you; afterwards it was violated without consideration, and I am not permitted to have leisure for the work I wish to do. Forenoon and afternoon alike, I am involved in the affairs of other people demanding my attention.[4]

In our own time Pope Leo XIII singled out St. Augustine and St. Jerome as the two Fathers of the Western Church who distinguished themselves by the best work in biblical matters: "Augustine, because of his wonderful acuteness in discovering the meaning of God's Word, and his fertile use of it in the defense of Catholic truth; Jerome, who has been honored by the Church under the name of *Doctor Maximus,* in consideration of his unique knowledge of the Scriptures, and his great labors in promoting their use." [5]

St. Augustine fully realized the ease with which popular attacks could be made against the Scriptures, and knew equally as well the difficulty of refuting, in a popular way, the objections brought against them. "Because there are in them [the O. T. Scriptures] certain things which give some offense to minds ignorant and careless of themselves, . . . they admit of being accused in a popular way; but they cannot be defended in a popular way, by any great number of persons by reasons of the mysteries contained in them." [6] The refutation of objections requires long labor and study, as well as expert presentation of the answers on the part of learned men. But oftentimes the men who are fitted to answer objections do not desire to be drawn into controversy. "But the few who know how to do this [defend the Scriptures] do not love public and much talked of controversies and disputes, and on this account are very little known, save to such as are most earnest in seeking them out." [7]

Throughout his life St. Augustine did his best to solve Scriptural problems brought to his attention by men far and near. His great

[4] Ep. 213, 5; P. L. 33, 967-968.
[5] Dorlodot, Darwinism and Catholic Thought, 16.
[6] Util. Cred. 2, 4; P. L. 42, 67-68.
[7] *Ibid.*

talents, his brilliant mind, his facile pen, and eloquent voice were generously devoted to the defense of the divine truth and authority of the Scriptures. His efforts to demonstrate that there is no conflict between the truth of Scripture and the facts of science are particularly noteworthy. He was humble enough to admit, that, even for him, there were many more things in Scripture that he did not know, than he knew,[8] and that the study of Scripture was a life work, at the end of which one was only beginning.

> Such is the depth of the Christian Scriptures, that even if I were attempting to study them from early boyhood to decrepit old age, with the utmost leisure, the most unwearied zeal, and talents greater than I possess, I would still be making progress in discovering their treasures. . . . So many things which are veiled under manifold shadows of mystery remain to be inquired into by those who are advancing in the study, and so great is the depth of wisdom, not only in the words, . . . but also in the things themselves, that the experience of the oldest, ablest, and the most zealous students of Scripture illustrates what Scripture itself has said: *When a man hath done, then he beginneth* (Ecclus. 18, 6).[9]

It is therefore to this student of Scripture, to this defender of the ancient faith that we come to learn his teaching on the inspiration and canonicity of Scripture.

[8] Ep. 55, 21, 38; P. L. 33, 222.
[9] Ep. 137, 1, 3; P. L. 33, 516.

PART I

INSPIRATION

CHAPTER I

Existence and Nature of Inspiration

§ I. The Fact of Inspiration

St. Augustine's belief in the inspired character of the Scriptures stands out so prominently in his writings that one almost hesitates to make it a special topic of treatment. Nevertheless a selection of some of the more striking passages in which he acknowledges the existence of inspiration seems to be appropriate. It will not only demonstrate that for him the inspiration of Scripture was a fact, but will also serve as a preparation for an understanding of his concept of inspiration.

The fact of the inspiration of Scripture is asserted by him in a general way in the many passages in which he makes God the *author* of them. It will suffice to quote his words to Adimantus, the Manichean, who denied the divine origin and character of Scripture. "Both Testaments," says St. Augustine, "have been written by the one God."[1] And again: "Let them know that *everything,* both in the Old as well as in the New Testament was written and commended by the one Holy Spirit."[2]

The same fact is affirmed more specifically in those statements in which he says that God *inspired* the Scriptures and that men wrote them under *divine inspiration.* Thus in *De Trinitate,* he says; that, as God created the universe and the creatures in it, so also he inspired the Scriptures.[3] Again, the books of Genesis and Ecclesiasticus are one in authority and truth, because they have been written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth. "Both Scriptures [Genesis and Ecclus.] are one, because both have been written under the inspiration of the Holy

[1] *Utrumque Testamentum . . . ab uno Deo . . conscriptum.* C. Adim. 7, 5; P. L. 42, 139.

[2] *Omnia tam in Vetere quam in Novo Testamento uno sancto Spiritu conscripta et commendata esse sentirent. Ibid.* 3, 3; P. L. 42, 134.

[3] *Qui et illam inspiravit [Scripturam] et istam [creaturam] creavit.* Trin. Proem. 1, P. L. 42, 845.

Ghost, the Spirit of Truth." [4] As for the human authors of Scripture he says in general that they have composed their books under divine inspiration. "Our authors [the writers of Scripture] whose writings are divinely inspired, have composed a Canon [of books] which enjoys a most wholesome authority." [5]

His formulas for quoting the Scriptures likewise reveal his belief in their inspired character. The Scriptures are *verbum Dei,*[6] *verba Dei,*[7] *divina verba,*[8] *divina oracula,*[9] *eloquia Dei,*[10] *eloquia divina,*[11] *sermo divinus,*[12] *libri Dei,*[13] *libri sancti,*[14] *divina scriptura,*[15] *sancta scriptura,*[16] *sacra scriptura,*[17] *scriptura Dei,*[18] *divinae litterae,*[19] *litterae Dei,*[20], *propheticae litterae,*[21] *divinae auctoritates,*[22] *divina testimonia,*[23] *testimonia Dei.*[24]

Of special interest in this connection are the remarks which St. Augustine makes concerning the formulas of quotation used by St. Paul. St. Augustine says that when Paul used the expression, "Isaias said," or "Osee said, etc.", or the formula, "It is written," it was to indicate that he was quoting writings which possessed

[4] *Utraque* [*Scriptura*] *una est, quia uno Spiritu veritatis inspirante conscripta est.* Gen. ad Litt. 4, 34, 53; P. L. 34, 319. Cf. Civ. Dei, 15, 8, 1; P. L. 41, 446.

[5] *Auctores nostri, quorum scripta divinitus inspirata canonem nobis saluberrima auctoritate fecerunt.* Doct. Christ. 4, 6, 9; P. L. 34, 92. Cf. also *Ibid.* 2, 2, 3; P. L. 34, 37; 2, 6, 8; 3, 27, 38; Gen. ad Litt. 2, 9, 20; P. L. 34, 270; Civ. Dei, 10, 30; P. L. 41, 310; *ibid.* 18, 31, 2; col. 588; *ibid.* 18, 41, 3; col. 602; Ep. 143, 3; P. L. 33, 586; C. Adv. L. 2, 5, 19; P. L. 42, 649; Unit. Eccl. 7, 15; P. L. 43, 400; Pecc. Mer. 2, 10, 16; P. L. 44, 161; Trin. 3, 11, 23; P. L. 42, 882; In Evang. Joan. T. 1, 1; P. L. 35, 1379; En. in Ps. 8, 7; P. L. 36, 111 sq.; In Ps. 62, 1 col. 748; In Ps. 90, sermo 2, 1; P. L. 37, 1159; In Ps. 104, 13; P. L. 37, 1397; In Ps. 126, 2, 2; In Ps. 135, 3; In Ps. 149, 5; *et passim.*

[6] Ep. 31, 3; P. L. 33, 123.
[7] Ep. 147, 13, 32; col. 611.
[8] Ep. 147, 16, 40; col. 614.
[9] Ep. 55, 20, 37; col. 222.
[10] Ep. 82, 2, 10; col. 279.
[11] *Ibid.* 2, 5; col. 277.
[12] Ep. 55, 8, 14; col. 211.
[13] Ep. 54, 4, 5; col. 202.
[14] Ep. 52, 3; col. 195.
[15] Ep. 82, 2, 6; col. 278.
[16] *Ibid.* col. 278.
[17] Ep. 129, 3, col. 491.
[18] Ep. 78, 1; col. 267.
[19] Ep. 93, 23; col. 333.
[20] *Ibid.* 30, col. 336.
[21] Ep. 102, 21; col. 379.
[22] Civ. Dei, 11, 31; P. L. 41, 345.
[23] Ep. 217, 7, 28; P. L. 33, 986.
[24] Ep. 93, 6, 21; col. 332.

divine authority.[25] The formulas, "it is written in the Law," "it is written in the Law and Prophets," likewise were intended by St. Paul to show that the words quoted are God's.[26] The formula, "Scripture says," is equivalent to the expression "God says," and is used by St. Paul in place of it, because Scripture is God's.[27] In fine, says St. Augustine, "By these and similar expressions the Apostle commends the Scriptures . . . as those of God, who is both good and true." [28]

On the other hand Paul's formulas, employed to introduce quotations from pagan authors, show that he did not consider God as the author of their writings. "When the Apostle of the Gentiles has occasion to quote anything from the Gentile authors, he does not call them prophets of God, nor does he say that God is the author of their writings (*nec illarum scripturarum Deum dicit auctorem*), although he finds there some true statement." [29]

In stating that the Scriptures, written by men under divine inspiration, have God for their author, St. Augustine acknowledges that he is asserting nothing new, but rather is bearing witness to an ancient and well established belief, accepted by both the learned and unlearned alike. "It is not without reason then, that . . . so many and great people, both learned and unlearned, in the country and in the city have believed that God spoke through them [the canonical writers], and by them when they wrote these books." [30] "Believe me," he says to Honoratus, "whatever is in these Scriptures [O. T.] is high and divine. . . . Is it too much for us to show a similar good will towards them [the authors of Scripture] of whom it has been confirmed from long antiquity that the Holy Ghost spoke through them?" [31] So well established is the doctrine

[25] *Ea scriptura intelligitur, in qua est auctoritas Dei.* C. Adv. L. 2, 4, 13; P. L. 42, 646.

[26] *Ostendens utique in eadem scriptura Deum loqui.* Ibid.

[27] *Ipsam Scripturam pro Deo posuit, quia Dei est. Ibid.*

[28] *His atque hujusmodi attestationibus Dei boni et veri esse Scripturas illas, . . . apostolica commendat auctoritas. Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Unde non immerito, cum illa scriberent, eis Deum vel per eos locutum . . . in agris atque in urbibus cum doctis atque indoctis tot tantique populi crediderunt.* Civ. Dei 18, 41, 1; P. L. 41, 600.

[31] *Quidquid est, mihi crede, in Scripturis illis, altum et divinum est. . .*

that God is the author of Scripture that to deny it is heretical impiety. "He therefore with heretical impiety does injury to the Old Testament Scripture, who with an impious and sacrilegious face denies that it comes from the good, sovereign and true God, as Marcion and Manicheus do." [32] Since Augustine's time the phrase, "God is the author of Scripture," has become the basic Catholic formula of inspiration found so frequently in ecclesiastical documents.[33]

§ II. St. Augustine's Concept of Inspiration

1. *The Part of God in Inspiration.*

The divine action of inspiration is, according to St. Augustine's teaching, one which is common to the three Divine Persons.[34] At times St. Augustine attributes the inspiration of the Scriptures to the Father,[35] and the Son,[36] but more frequently to the Holy Ghost..[37] In a letter to Marcellinus he says that the men who wrote the Scriptures "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.[38]

Quantum erat ut similem benevolentiam praeberemus eis, per quos locutum esse Spiritum sanctum tam diuturna vetustate firmatum est? Util. Cred. 6, 13; P. L. 42, 74-75.

[32] *Ille igitur haeretica impietate Scripturae Veteris Testamenti facit injuriam, qui eam ex Deo bono, summo et vero, fronte sacrilegae impietatis negat: sicut Marcion, sicut Manichaeus.* Gest. Pelag. 5, 15; P. L. 44, 329.

[33] Cf. *Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua*, Can. 1; Mansi, vol. 3, col. 950; Concil. Florent. *Decretum Pro Jacobitis*; Concil. Trid. Sess. 4. *Decretum de Canonicis Script.*; Concil. Vaticanum Sess. 3, *cap.* 2, *De. Rev.*; Ency. *Prov. Deus*; *Sp. Paraclitus.*

[34] St. Augustine "insists that every external operation of God is due to the whole Trinity, and cannot be attributed to one Person alone, save by appropriation." Joyce, G. H., *Trinity*, in C. E. 15, 55. Cf. Cong. Adult. 1, 18, 21; P. L. 40, 463, *inseparabilia sint opera Trinitatis.*

[35] En. in Ps. 8, 7; P. L. 36, 111, 112. Here the Father is also associated with the Holy Ghost in the work of inspiration.

[36] C. Adim. 9, 1; P. L. 42, 140: In Evang. Joan. T. 24, 7; P. L. 35, 1596; *ibid.* T. 9, 5; col. 2049; Cons. Evang. 1, 35, 54; P. L. 34, 1070.

[37] Ep. 143, 3; P. L. 33, 586; Civ. Dei. 16, 2, 3; P. L. 41, 479; C. Pelag. 1, 20, 38; P. L. 44, 569; Gen. ad Litt. 2, 9, 20; P. L. 34, 270; En. in Ps. 8, 7; P. L. 36, 111, 112; In Ps. 135, 3; P. L. 37, 1757; Doct. Christ. 3, 27, 38; P. L. 34, 80.

[38] *Spiritu sancto acti locuti sunt.* Ep. 143, 3; P. L. 33, 586. St. Augustine even as we ourselves, frequently employs the terms "spoke"

And again speaking of David and St. John, he says: "Behold, the Holy Ghost inspired and filled two hearts, two mouths and moved two tongues." [39] God's part in inspiration therefore, begins with an impulse which He imparts to the sacred writer, in virtue of which, the latter is moved to undertake the composition of the Scriptures. Indeed it could not be truly said that God is the author of Scripture, if the initiative to write came from man himself and not from God. St. Augustine is entirely consistent when he writes in *De Consensu Evangelistarum*: "one must believe that the writing of the Gospel came about by divine disposition." [40] His teaching on this point finds its basis in the statement of St. Peter that: *prophecy* [*of Scripture*] *came not by the will of man at any time, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* (2 Pet. 1, 21).

God's part in inspiration does not cease with the internal impulse to write, but continues in the act of writing. The divine influence is present in the sacred authors [41] and directs them in the composition of their books.[42] It even anticipates the act of writing and aids the sacred writers in the selection of their material. Thus Moses gathers his data under divine guidance and inspiration. "The prophet [Moses] has compiled a narrative of human actions, under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy

and "said", when there is question of written and not oral words. In future quotations from St. Augustine, when such expressions as *dixit, ait, inquit, locutus est,* occur, it will be unnecessary to explain that they refer to written words. Cf. Civ. Dei 9, 20; P. L. 41, 273; C. Adv. L. 2, 2, 5; P. L. 42, 641; En. in Ps. 104, 27; P. L. 37, 1400.

[39] *Ecce inspiravit et implevit duo corda, duo ora, movit duas linguas Spiritus Dei.* In Ep. Joan. T. 9, 5; P. L. 35, 2048, 2049. Cf. ibid. *Si unus flatus inflat duas tibias, non potest unus Spiritus implere duo corda, agitare duas linguas?* Cf. In Evang. Joan. T. 1, 1; P. L. 35, 1379; En. in Ps. 33, 13; sermo 2, 17; P. L. 36, 317.

[40] *In conscribendo Evangelio, quod divinitus ordinatum esse credendum est. Op. cit.* 1, 2, 3; P. L. 34, 1043; *ibid.* 1, 1, 2; col. 1043; cf. Vogels, H., *St. Augustins Schrift, De. Cons. Evang.* p. 65.

[41] *Spiritus* [*sanctus*], *qui inerat scribenti ea.* Gen. ad Litt. 5, 8, 23; P. L. 34, 329.

[42] *Administratione Spiritus sancti haec gesta conscripta sunt.* Ep. ad Gal. 40; P. L. 35, 2133. Cf. Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 65.

Ghost." [43] There are many facts of history that might have been recorded in the Scriptures, but actually the sacred authors have incorporated into their narratives only what the Holy Ghost deemed sufficient. "Everything has not been written, . . . but only so much as was deemed sufficient by the Holy Ghost, who was present in the one who wrote them." [44]

St. Augustine takes pains to explain, both in *De Consensu Evangelistarum,* and in *Contra Faustum,* that the Evangelists acquired the knowledge of the facts related by them in a purely human way, although he does admit that if anything still remained obscure to them, they could have received enlightenment from the Holy Ghost, who was given them by Christ.[45] If the Evangelists were not actual eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the events and discourses recorded by them they could easily have received their information from other reliable sources. In reality, as St. Augustine states, at least with respect to the two Evangelists who were Apostles, many of the things written in the Gospels were known to them from personal contact with Christ, for they had both seen His deeds and heard His words. As for those events in the life of Christ prior to their discipleship,—Christ's birth, infancy and boyhood,—these could have been learned with exactness and certitude, either from Christ Himself, or from His parents or others.

> The first preachers of the Gospel were the Apostles, who beheld our Lord Himself . . Jesus Christ, when He was yet present in the flesh. And not only did these men keep in remembrance the words heard from His lips, and the deeds wrought by Him beneath their eyes: but they could also seek out and know from most reliable sources and most trustworthy witnesses, — from Himself, His parents, or other individuals,—the divine and memorable occurrences which took place before

---

[43] *Ea quippe hominum facta, sancto Spiritu disponente atque inspirante collegit propheta narrator.* C. Faust. 22, 83; P. L. 42, 455.

[44] *Non omnia scripta sunt, . . sed quantum satis judicavit Spiritus [sanctus], qui inerat scribenti ea.* Gen. ad Litt. 5, 8, 23; P. L. 34, 329; cf. Civ. Dei 15, 15, 1; P. L. 41, 456; En. in Ps. 8, 7; P. L. 36, 111, 112; De Mend. 5, 7; P. L. 40, 492; In Ep. Joan. T. 9, 5; P. L. 35, 2049.

[45] *Per Spiritum sanctum ab ipso impertitum scire potuerunt, si quid lateret in rebus humanis.* C. Faust. 7, 2; P. L. 42, 240; cf. Cons. Evang. 3, 7, 31; P. L. 34, 1176.

they had become disciples, namely, the events of His nativity, infancy and youth.[46]

In a more positive statement to Faustus, St. Augustine asserts that the Apostles actually did describe the birth of Christ from information obtained by them in a purely natural manner. "They obtained information of the birth of Christ and of His descent in a purely natural way." [47] In the case of Mark and Luke who were not Apostles their knowledge of Christ could have been obtained from the Apostles Matthew and John. St. Augustine intimates that this was done. "Why might not Matthew have heard the truth from his fellow disciple John, if John was present and he himself was not, if we ourselves who are born so long after . . . can learn the truth about Christ from John's writings? . . . Hence it is that not only Matthew's Gospel, but also those of Mark and Luke, who were companions of these Apostles, possess the same authority [as John's]." [48]

St. Augustine's concept of inspiration is broad enough to include the use of profane sources by the sacred writers. He considers it possible that the author of the Book of Numbers used the books of the Chaldeans, Egyptians, or other nations, and he frankly confesses that St. Paul has taken quotations from several Greek secular writers, both philosophers and poets. This use of profane sources by the sacred writers is explained by the principle that "it is permissible for the divine authority to take truthful testimony from whatever sources he may wish." [49]

Revelation consequently is not for St. Augustine an essential element of inspiration. It can be an accessory of inspiration, and in fact was such in certain instances, as St. Augustine acknowledges. In general it was customary for the prophets to receive revelation.

The spirits of the dead are able to know not only past and present,

---

[46] Cons. Evang. 1, 1, 1; P. L. 34, 1043.

[47] *Solo humano sensu, genus Christi secundum carnem et totam originem collegerunt.* C. Faust. 7, 2; P. L. 42, 240.

[48] *Ibid.* 17, 3; P. L. 42, 341. Cf. Cons. Evang. 1, 2, 4; P. L. 34, 1044; Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 65; Luke, 1, 2; Jerome, *De Script. Eccl.* 7.

[49] *Licet enim divinae auctoritati unde voluerit, quod verum invenerit, testimonium sumere.* Quaest. Hept. 4, Q. 42, P. L. 34, 738.

but also future events, by reason of the revelation granted them by the Spirit of God, just as the prophets while alive, were wont to know them. And yet they did not have a knowledge of all of them, but of those only which the Providence of God deemed should be revealed to them.[50]

In particular what Moses wrote concerning the creation of the world was given to him by divine revelation.[51] It was by revelation that David wrote, "O God, the heathens are come into Thy inheritance." [52] It is by revelation that the mysteries of God and His secret plans are known,[53] and that the actions of angels in heaven can be communicated to men in the Scriptures. "Because these [the actions of the angels] are invisible, they could not have been made known to men through the Holy Scriptures, unless the Holy Ghost had revealed them." [54]

Special mention should be given at this point to the meaning St. Augustine attaches to the word *inspiratus* in a very interesting text of his work *In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus*,—a text which will be quoted again, when treating of man's part in inspiration. After quoting the words of St. John's Gospel: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,* St. Augustine says that he will explain them as well as he can, but he asks: "to speak of the matter as it is, who is able?" [and adds]:

I venture to say, my brethren, perhaps not John himself spoke of the matter as it is, but, even he, only as he was able; for it was man that spoke of God, inspired indeed by God, but still man. Because he was inspired he said something; if he had not been inspired, he would have said nothing; but because he was an inspired man, he spoke not the whole, but what a man could, that he said.[55]

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[50] Cur. Mort. 15, 18; P. L. 40, 606.

[51] Conf. 12, 17, 24; P. L. 32, 834.

[52] En. in Ps. 78, 1; P. L. 36, 1009.

[53] En. in Ps. 89, 6; P. L. 37, 1143.

[54] *Quia ergo haec tam latenter gesta sunt, ut indicari hominibus per Scripturas sanctas, nisi sancto Spiritu revelante, non possent.* Sermo 12, 6, 6; P. L. 38, 103.

[55] *Nam dicere ut est, quis potest? Audeo dicere, fratres mei, forsitan nec ipse Joannes dixit ut est, sed et ipse ut potuit; quia de Deo homo dixit: et quidem inspiratus a Deo, sed tamen homo. Quia inspiratus, dixit*

From the context the word *inspiratus* signifies something more than the act of writing under special divine influence. The notion of revelation is also directly implied.[56] John is writing of the divine life of the Word of God, a subject of which he could have no knowledge, unless revelation had been given to him. Hence when Augustine says that John could have said nothing unless he had been inspired, it is as though he had said: John could have written nothing unless he had received revelation. John's inspiration in this case is an internal revelation to which is joined the divine impulse to communicate to others in writing what has been revealed to him. The word inspiration used in this wider sense is also to be found in other early Church writers.[57] For it is only since the time of St. Thomas that any great emphasis has been laid on the explicit distinction between the two charismata of revelation and inspiration.[58] In the passage just cited from St. Augustine, revelation and inspiration are represented as intimately associated with one another, but the association is not a necessary one arising from identity of nature. Revelation and inspiration taken in their strict acceptation are really two different concepts, and St. Augustine has already made it evident that they not only can, but also actually do occur separately.

He does not, however, discuss the question of the relationship of revelation to inspiration. He is more concerned with stating the fact that the Scripture writers, all of whom were inspired, were on occasion the recipients of revelation. On the other hand he does indicate the manner in which the authors of Scripture were made the recipients of revelation. Truths were communicated to them, either through their sense faculties, or directly through the intellect. "And what we have neither had experience of through our bodily senses, nor have been able to reach through the intellect,

aliquid; si non inspiratus esset, dixisset nihil: quia vero homo inspiratus, non totum quod est dixit; sed quod potuit homo dixit. Op. cit. 1, 1; P. L. 35, 1379.

[56] Durand, A., *Inspiration,* D. A. F. C. vol. 2, 901.

[57] Schanz, *Christian Apology,* vol. 2, 363; Pesch, *De Inspir. Scrip.* p. 2; p. 111, 112; cf. Divers. Quaest. 2, 1; P. L. 40, 129 [*Spiritus prophetiae*] . . *afficit . . alios per informationem spiritus . . alios per fructum mentis ad intelligentiam; alios utraque inspiratione.*

[58] Durand, A., *Inspiration,* C. E. vol. 8, 47.

must undoubtedly be believed on the testimony of those witnesses by whom the Scriptures, justly called divine, were written; and who by divine assistance were enabled either through bodily sense or intellectual perception to see or foresee the things in question." [59]

St. Augustine not only asserts the fact that God assisted and directed the sacred writers in the choice of their material, but also indicates the manner in which the Holy Ghost operated in them. The divine influence extended itself to the intellectual faculties of the sacred writer.[60] It governed his mind, and memory, in such a way that his thoughts were the result of a divine prompting or suggestion.

The recollections of those historians [the Evangelists] have been ruled by the hand of Him who rules the waters. For the human memory moves through a variety of thoughts, and it is not in any man's power to regulate either the subject which comes into his mind, or the time of its suggestion. Seeing then that those holy and truthful men, in this matter of the order of their narrations committed their seemingly chance thoughts to the direction of the hidden power of God, to whom nothing is casual, it does not become any mere man . . . to say, "this ought to have been inserted here", for he is utterly ignorant of the reason which led God to will its being inserted in the place it occupies.[61] For as it is not in one's own power, however admirable and trustworthy may be the knowledge he has once obtained of the facts, to determine the order in which he will recall them to memory—for the way in which one thing comes into a person's mind before or after another, is something which proceeds not as we will, but simply as it is given to us,—it is reasonable enough to suppose that each of the Evangelists believed

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[59] Enchir. 4; P. L. 40, 233; cf. Divers. Quaest. 2, 1; P. L. 40, 129; Gen. ad Litt. 12, 1 sq.; P. L. 34, 453; Cons. Evang. 1, 24, 37; P. L. 34, 1059.

[60] *Quid ergo intelligendum est, nisi hoc actum esse secretiore consilio providentiae Dei, qua mentes Evangelistarum sunt gubernatae?* Cons. Evang. 3, 7, 30; P. L. 34, 1175.

[61] *Recordationes enim eorum ejus manu gubernatae sunt, qui gubernat aquam . . . Fluitat enim humana memoria per varias cogitationes, nec in cujusquam potestate est quid et quando ei veniat in mentem. Cum ergo illi sancti et veraces viri quasi fortuita recordationum suarum propter narrationis ordinem occultae Dei potestati, cui nihil fortuitum est, commississent, non oportet quemquam hominum dicere . . hoc loco poni debuit, quod valde ignorat cur eo loco Deus poni voluerit.* Cons. Evang. 3, 13, 48; P. L. 34, 1187-88.

it to have been his duty to relate what he had to relate in that order in which it had pleased God to bring to his recollection the matters he was engaged in recording.[62]

Consequently one has no right to find fault with the order of Mark's narration, for he has arranged the details of his Gospel in the order in which they occurred to his mind by divine inspiration.[63] In a word God who governed the minds of the sacred writers was responsible both for the subject which came into their minds and for its occurrence in one place rather than another in the narrative.

A passage in *De Consensu Evangelistarum*,[64] in which St. Augustine describes the Evangelists as "the writing hands", and Christ as "the dictating head", deserves special attention, because one might be led to conclude from it that St. Augustine is witness for a verbal dictation or mechanical theory of inspiration.

He who sent His prophets before His own descent, also despatched the Apostles after His ascension. Moreover in virtue of His humanity which He assumed, He stands to all His disciples in the relation of the head to the members of His body. Therefore, when those disciples have written matters which He declared and spoke to them, it ought not by any means to be said that He has written nothing Himself: since the truth is that His members have accomplished only what they became acquainted with through the dictation of the head (*quandoquidem membra ejus id operata sunt, quod dictante capite cognoverunt*). For all that He was minded to give for our perusal on the subject of His own doings and sayings, He commanded to be written by those disciples, whom He used as if they were His own hands (*quidquid enim ille de*

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[62] *Quia enim nullius in potestate est, quamvis optime fideliterque res cognitas, quo quisque ordine recordetur—quid enim prius posteriusve homini veniat in mentem, non est ut volumus, sed ut datur—satis probabile est quod unusquisque Evangelistarum eo ordine credidit debuisse narrare, quo voluisset Deus ea ipsa quae narrabat ejus recordationi suggerere.* Cons. Evang. 2, 21, 51; P. L. 34, 1102. The use of *suggerere* in the sense of bring to mind is also found in St. John's Gospel (14, 26). "The Holy Ghost . . will bring to your mind (*suggeret*) all things whatsoever I shall have said to you." Cf. Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 66; Forcellini, A., *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis*, vol. 4, 231.

[63] *Eo loco id ponendum judicavit [Marcus], quo divina inspiratione suggestum est. Ibid.* 3, 13, 48; P. L. 34, 1187.

[64] *Op. cit.* 1, 35, 54; P. L. 34, 1070.

suis factis et dictis nos legere voluit, hoc scribendum illis tanquam suis manibus imperavit).[65]

As H. Vogels correctly observes, the figure of Christ "the dictating head" and the Evangelists "the writing hands", is apt to be misunderstood unless the motives which prompted him to use it are taken into consideration.[66] St. Augustine is not here concerned with a discussion of how the Evangelists acted under divine inspiration, but with the refutation of the assertions of the enemies of the Gospel that the teaching of the Evangelists differs from that of Christ, and that the Evangelists differ among themselves.[67] In his effort to show that there is complete unity of doctrine between the Evangelists and Christ, and also that there is perfect harmony among the Evangelists themselves, St. Augustine introduces the figure of the mystic body. Christ is its head, and the Evangelists are its members. What the members write, is as though Christ Himself had written, and in this sense Christ has left writings to posterity. The thought that there is complete unity among the Evangelists, because of their complete unity with Christ remains, says Vogels,[68] the fundamental idea of the *De Consensu Evangelistarum*. The voice of the disciple is the voice of Christ.

This passage of St. Augustine is instructive in another way. It serves as a caution against the indiscreet application of individual utterances of St. Augustine bearing on inspiration.[69] H. Vogels[70] thinks that a careless application of the figure of the mystic body would bring one to the conclusion that "all the living members of Christ are inspired, though not to the same degree." Such a conclusion, however, would be a distortion of the Pauline doctrine of the mystical body, according to which the different members

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] St. *Augustins Schrift De Cons. Evang.* p. 67.

[67] Cons. Evang. 1, 24-25; P. L. 34, 1069-1070.

[68] *Op. cit.* 67-68.

[69] St. Augustine says that he has undertaken his work *De Cons. Evang.: inspirante et adjuvante Domino, op. cit.* 1, 7, 10; P. L. 34, 1047, yet he clearly distinguishes his writings as well as those of the other Fathers from the canonical Scriptures. Ep. 93, 10, 35; P. L. 33, 338; Ep. 143, 2; P. L. 33, 585; Ep. 147, 16, 39; col. 614; Grat. Christ. 43, 47; P. L. 44, 381.

[70] *Op. cit.* 68.

perform, not the same, but different functions. It would also be at variance with St. Augustine's exposition of it, which is, that the members share a common life, but discharge diverse functions.[71] Neither is St. Augustine to be taken literally when he says that the Scriptures are "letters sent from heaven",[72] or that they are "the handwriting of God",[73] or that the authors of Scripture are "the fingers of God."[74]

The meaning attached by St. Augustine to the verb *dictare* and consequently his position respecting verbal dictation, should also be learned from other passages in which it occurs. In *Letter 82*[75] he says that Jerome has written "*dictante Spiritu sancto*", yet in the very next paragraph[76] of the same letter, he clearly distinguishes between the authority of Jerome's writings and that of the canonical Scriptures.

> I confess to your Charity, that it is to those books of scripture *alone*, which are now called canonical, that I have learned to pay such respect and honor, that I most firmly believe that no author of them erred in any statement which he wrote. . . . As to all other writings . . I do not accept their teaching as true on the mere ground of the opinion being held by their authors.

It is not his intention, therefore, to assert either that St. Jerome has written his work under the same divine inspiration granted to the authors of Scripture, or that each of Jerome's words has come to him from the Holy Ghost by verbal dictation. *Dictare* at times does mean to dictate words, and is so used by St. Augustine in speaking of his own works,[77] which he dictated to a scribe, but it is susceptible of many and wider meanings. It may also signify to command, order, urge, impel, charge one to do something.[78] It is

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[71] *Officia diversa, vita communis.* Sermo 267, 4, 4; P. L. 38, 1231. Cf. *ibid. singuli propria operantur.*

[72] En. in Ps. 90, sermo 2, 1; P. L. 37, 1159; In Ps. 149, 5; P. L. 37, 1952.

[73] En. in Ps. 144, 17; P. L. 37, 1880.

[74] En. in Ps. 8, 7; P. L. 36, 111, 112; cf. Sermo 85, 1, 1; P. L. 38, 520; In Evang. Joan. T. 30, 1; P. L. 35, 1632.

[75] 1, 2; P. L. 33, 276.

[76] 1, 3.

[77] Retract. 2, 67; P. L. 32, 656.

[78] Forcellini, A., *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis,* vol. 2, 118; T. L. L. vol. 5, 1009-1013.

in this last sense that the expression "*dictante Spiritu sancto*", as referred to St. Jerome by St. Augustine, is rendered by J. C. Cunningham in his translation of St. Augustine's *Letters.*[79] Hence when St. Augustine says of the Psalms: "these Psalms which we chant, . . . were spoken and written at the dictation of the Spirit of God";[80] there is no necessity of recognizing in his words a confession of verbal dictation for the Psalms, but simply the admission that they have been written under the influence of the Holy Ghost. For as Schanz remarks with reference to the use of *dictare* by Augustine and the other Fathers, "the Fathers did not use these expressions in the strictest sense, as though every passage of Scripture had been verbally inspired [dictated] by the Holy Ghost."[81]

In passing it may also be noted that theologians have not taken the term *dictare* in the decree of the Council of Trent (Sess. 3, cap. 2) on the inspiration of the Scriptures in the sense of verbal dictation, but in the wider meaning of *inspirare.*[82] Moreover the Vatican Council following in the footsteps of the Councils of Florence and Trent, felt that it correctly represented the teaching of the Church, when it defined that the Church receives the books of the Old and New Testament "as sacred and canonical . . . because, having been written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost (*Spiritu sancto inspirati conscripti*), they have God for their author, and as such have been delivered to the Church."[83] Had the Council of Trent intended to teach verbal dictation by its use of *dictare,* the Vatican Council would not have replaced *dictare* by *inspirare,* a term which does not connote verbal dictation.

In his work *Contra Adimantum,* St. Augustine affirms that the words written by Moses in Exodus 20, 5, and 34, 4, were those which the Holy Ghost willed he should use. "The Holy Ghost also willed these words to be employed."[84] But neither can this

[79] *Op. cit.* 318.

[80] *Spiritu Dei dictante dicti et conscripti sunt.* En. in Ps. 62, 1; P. L. 36, 748.

[81] *Christian Apology,* vol. 2, 427.

[82] Schanz, *op. cit.* 2, 427.

[83] Concil. Vat. Sess. 3, Cap. 2. *De Revelatione.*

[84] *Sanctus enim Spiritus . . his etiam verbis uti voluit.* C. Adim. 11, P. L. 42, 142. Cf. Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 72.

statement of his be cited to show that he favored a theory of verbal dictation. For it is quite apparent that "to will" and "to dictate" are not synonymous.

It now remains to inquire whether St. Augustine's belief in the inspired character of the Septuagint makes him a proponent of a verbal theory of inspiration. Accepting as true the legendary account of the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek,[85] he explains the perfect verbal agreement reached by the seventy-two translators working independently of one another, by assuming that they were inspired.[86] Did he, however, believe that their inspiration involved verbal dictation? One is inclined to suspect that such was the case. Nevertheless St. Augustine does not say explicitly that it was so, nor does he in any way attempt to explain the mode of their inspiration. Granting that he believed the translation of the Septuagint to have been effected by verbal dictation, one may at least say that he accounted for the composition of the Scriptures themselves in a far different fashion. This may now be seen from the scope allowed by him to the human authors of Scripture under divine inspiration.

2. *The Part of Man in Inspiration.*

The prominence given by St. Augustine to the divine element in inspiration should not lead one to conclude that in his concept of inspiration there is no room for human activity, or that at best it is very insignificant. In some passages he so strongly stresses human activity in the composition of Scripture, that the author seems to be acting independently of inspiration. St. Augustine's tendency to emphasize the divine element at one time, and the

[85] The legend of the translation of the whole O. T. from Hebrew into Greek by seventy-two translators working independently of one another is a development of the story contained in the unauthentic letter of Aristeas relative to the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek. The legend was commonly received until the days of Jerome. Cf. Schumacher, H., *Handbook of Script.* vol. 1, 71, 81; Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 72. Gigot, F., *Gen. Introd.* 265.

[86] Civ. Dei 15, 14, 2; P. L. 41, 455; *ibid.* 15, 23, 3; col. 470; Doct. Christ. 2, 15, 22; P. L. 34, 46; Quaest. Hept. 1, Q. 169; P. L. 34, 595; *ibid.* 6, Q. 19; col. 784; En. in Ps. 87, 10; P. L. 37, 1115 sq.; Ps. 135, 3; col. 1757; Doct. Christ. 4, 7, 15; P. L. 34, 96.

human at another, has been noted by Schanz in his *Christian Apology.*[87]

> In his work on the Gospels [*De Consensu Evangelistarum*] he puts forward two views of inspiration, so sharply antagonistic, that at first blush one suspects a contradiction lurking within. So much stress is laid on the divine influence that human action seems almost effaced; on the other hand, the scope allowed to man's work is so wide that we find ourselves on the borderland of inspiration.

At no time, however, is it St. Augustine's intention to represent the human author of Scripture as withdrawn from, and independent of, divine inspiration, or to set forth the divine influence as necessitating man, and depriving him of free human activity. For him the inspiration of Scripture is a twofold simultaneous action, divine and human. It involves a twofold simultaneous authorship, that of God and man. And the human authorship, as he himself points out, is not denied, if at one time reference is made to the divine author rather than to the human. Thus, "when the prophet spoke what do we say? We plainly say, God said. We also say, the prophet said. And we say both correctly, for we find both usages supported by authority, . . . for what a man says by reason of a gift of God, God says." [88] Again, "with regard to the words of the holy prophet, although we say, the prophet said, we wish nothing else to be understood than that the Lord said. And if we say the Lord said, we do not exclude the prophet, but we call attention to Him by whom the prophet spoke." [89]

St. Augustine's conception of God operating through man, and of man working under God in this twofold authorship of Scripture is well expressed in the course of an allegorical interpretation given

[87] Vol. 2, 424. Cf. Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 74. St. Augustine himself makes a similar observation regarding his expressions on the question of grace and free will. *Ista quaestio, ubi de arbitrio voluntatis et Dei gratia disputatur, ita est ad discernendum difficilis, ut quando defenditur liberum arbitrium, negari Dei gratia videatur; quando autem asseritur Dei gratia, liberum arbitrium putetur auferri.* Grat. Christ. 47, 52; P. L. 44, 383.

[88] Sermo 2, 4, 5; P. L. 38, 29-30.

[89] Trin. 3, 11, 23; P. L. 42, 882.

to the expressions, "fingers of God" and "heavens" found in verse 4, Psalm 8.

Wherefore if, by reason of the same Holy Ghost who operated in them [the authors of Scripture], we may rightly understand the fingers of God to be those very ministers who were filled with the Holy Ghost, then we may likewise in this place interpret the heavens to be the books of both Testaments, since it is by these same ministers that all divine Scripture has been composed for us. . . . "For I will behold", said he, "the heavens, the work of Thy fingers", that is, I will behold and understand the Scriptures, which Thou, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, hast written through Thy ministers.[90]

Here, then, several important points for Augustine's concept of inspiration stand out. God is the author of Scripture, but through the instrumentality of men (*per eosdem, per ministros*). In order that men might serve as God's instruments He has filled them with divine energy—they have been filled with the Holy Ghost (*Spiritu sancto repletos*), and the Holy Ghost has operated both in them (*Spiritum qui in eis operatur*), and through them (*operante Spiritu sancto per ministros*).[91]

[90] *Quapropter si digitos Dei, eosdem ipsos ministros Spiritu sancto repletos, propter ipsum Spiritum qui in eis operatur, recte accipimus, quoniam per eosdem nobis omnis divina Scriptura confecta est; convenienter intelligimus hoc loco coelos dictos libros utriusque Testamenti . . quoniam videbo, inquit, coelos, opera digitorum tuorum: id est, cernam et intelligam Scripturas, quas operante Spiritu sancto per ministros tuos conscripsisti.* En. in Ps. 8, 7; P. L. 36, 111, 112; cf. Conf. 13, 15, 16; P. L. 32, 851-852. The suitableness of the word *conscribere* rather than *scribere* to express the two-fold authorship of Scripture cannot be denied. Gigot, *Gen. Introd.* 545-547. Nevertheless an argument for the two-fold authorship of Scripture cannot be made from St. Augustine's use of *conscribere*. *Conscribere* is employed by Augustine when speaking of books written by one author alone, v. g., himself; Enchir. 122, 33; P. L. 40, 290; by other Christian writers; Trin. 1, 3, 5; P. L. 42, 823; by pagan authors; Civ. Dei, 19, 23, 1; P. L. 41, 650; by heretics; Gest. Pelag. 6, 19; P. L. 44, 331; *Scribere* and *conscribere* are used indifferently in reference to Scripture writers and profane writers; Spir. et Litt. 5, 8; P. L. 44, 204; Cons. Evang. 2, Prol. 1; P. L. 34, 1071; C. Faust. 33, 6; P. L. 42, 514; cf. Pesch, *De Inspir. S. Scrip.* 433.

[91] *Loc. cit.* Similar statements are expressed elsewhere by St. Augustine. Men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; Ep. 143, 3; P. L. 33,

But this divine influence, enjoyed by the human author of Scripture, which operates in him and through him, does not hinder him from being a true author of Scripture. He is not a mere scriptor, amanuensis, or secretary, but is himself an author, and is so called by St. Augustine.[92] In St. Augustine's view of inspiration the human authors enjoy the free exercise of their mental powers, even though they, and their mental powers, function under divine influence.

He does not allow unbounded scope to the divine influence on the sacred writers, but limits it first of all, by the capabilities of human nature, and then by the individual capacities of the various writers.[93] The first of these two limitations appears in the passage of his work *In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus,* already referred to.

> I make so bold as to say, my brethren, that perhaps John himself did not speak of the matter as it is, but even he spoke as he was able, for it was man speaking of God, inspired indeed by God, but nevertheless man. Because he was inspired he said something. If he had not been inspired he would have said nothing. Because he was an inspired man, he did not say all that could be said, but what man could, that he said.[94]

The same thought that the men who were favored with inspiration still remained men, hedged in by human limitations, also appears, but less strikingly, in other passages of his works.[95]

The second limitation of the divine influence appears in *De Consensu Evangelistarum.*[96] Here he represents the Evangelists as striving to relate certain discourses verbatim, but failing to do so, because of the imperfection of their memories. "While retaining

586. God wrote by means of David; En. in Ps. 104, 27; P. L. 37, 1400, and Solomon, En. in Ps. 126, 2; P. L. 37, 1667; cf. also Ps. 135, 1; col. 1756; C. Pelag. 1, 20, 38; P. L. 44, 569; Gen. ad Litt. 2, 9, 20; P. L. 34, 270; Civ. Dei, 9, 20; *ibid.* 18, 31, 2; *ibid.* 22, 29, 3; *ibid.* 21, 9, 1; Ep. 88, 9; Ep. 143, 3; En. in Ps. 89, 6; in Ps. 135, 3.

[92] Doct. Christ. 3, 27, 38; P. L. 34, 80; Ep. 82, 1, 3; P. L. 33, 277 *et passim.*

[93] Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 75.

[94] *Op. cit.* 1, 1; P. L. 35, 1379.

[95] Cons. Evang. 2, 12, 28; P. L. 34, 1090; C. Adim. 7, 4; P. L. 42, 138; Gen. ad Litt. 5, 16, 34; P. L. 34, 333.

[96] *Op. cit.* 2, 12, 28; P. L. 34, 1091.

the fact itself, he [the Evangelist] may not succeed, however he may make that his aim, in giving verbatim the words themselves which he heard on the occasion." [97] St. Augustine is careful to add that in their failure to give the exact words, the Evangelists do not fall into error, but give an account which is substantially true.[98] Hence he believes that there is room for human liberty under inspiration, and that the divine influence does not prevent the memory of the sacred authors from functioning in a human way, according to their individual capacities. Consequently his statements in the same treatise *De Consensu Evangelistarum* already referred to,[99] in which God is said to rule and govern the memories of the Evangelists, must not be understood as excluding personal mental activity on the part of the sacred author, but rather as allowing human action under divine inspiration.

It is quite evident that St. Augustine makes every effort to be just to the human author of Scripture, by attributing to him the free use of his mental faculties.[100] Although the Holy Ghost is said to inspire the sacred writer and to select certain facts rather than others,[101] still it is the human author who gathers the material under the influence of the Holy Ghost.[102] The composition of the Book of Genesis is attributed to the influence of the Holy Ghost, nevertheless the human author is said to have followed his own plan in writing it.[103] The Evangelists likewise are permitted

[97] *Sive rem bene tenens [Evangelista] non assequatur, quamvis id conetur, memoriter etiam verba quae audivit ad integrum enuntiare. Ibid.*

[98] *Non nos debere arbitrari mentiri quemquam, si pluribus rem quam audierunt vel viderunt reminiscentibus, non eodem modo atque eisdem verbis eadem tamen res fuerit indicata. Ibid.*

[99] *Ibid.* 3, 13, 48; P. L. 34, 1187-88; *ibid.* 2, 21, 51; col. 1102.

[100] Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 77.

[101] *Non omnia scripta sunt, . . sed quantum satis judicavit Spiritus [sanctus], qui inerat scribenti ea.* Gen. ad Litt. 5, 8, 23; P. L. 34, 329.

[102] *Ea quippe hominum facta sancto Spiritu disponente atque inspirante collegit propheta narrator.* C. Faust. 22, 83; P. L. 42, 455.

[103] *Parum considerant, non omnes homines qui tunc esse potuerunt, scriptorem sacrae hujus historiae necesse habuisse nominare; sed eos solos quos operis suscepti ratio postulabat. Propositum quippe scriptoris illius fuit, per quem Spiritus sanctus id agebat, per successiones certarum generationum . . pervenire ad Abraham. . . Sed pertinuit ad Deum, quo ista*

to adopt different plans in composing their Gospels, yet the Holy Ghost governs and rules their minds.[104] St. Augustine represents Mark as willing a certain order to be adopted: "He [Mark] judged that it was to be set down in the place where, by divine inspiration, it had come into his mind";[105] yet in almost the next breath he says that God willed the same order to be followed. [It was written] "in that place where God willed it to be set down."[106] St. Augustine, however, is guilty of no contradiction. In his concept of inspiration the composition of Scripture is a common action shared by the divine and human author. God wills and man wills. In fact God brings it about that man write what He wills. "The readers of Scripture", says St. Augustine, "desire nothing more than to discover the thought and will of those by whom it was written, and through these to find out the will of God, in accordance with which they believe these men to have spoken."[107]

From what has already been said it is evident that St. Augustine had no sympathy with a Mantic concept of inspiration. The sacred writer does not lose consciousness under the divine influence, nor is he in any way a passive instrument. Instead there is real human coöperation, and real human mental activity. Indeed for the Evan-

inspirante conscripta sunt, has duas societates. . distinguere. Civ. Dei 15, 8, 1; P. L. 41, 446; *ibid.* 15, 15, 1-2; col. 456; *ibid.* 15, 20, 3; col. 464.

[104] *Cur autem Spiritus sanctus dividens propria unicuique prout vult, et ideo mentes quoque sanctorum propter libros in tanto auctoritatis culmine collocandos, in recolendo quae scriberent sine dubio gubernans et regens, alium sic, alium vero sic narrationem suam ordinare permiserit, quisquis pia diligentia quaesiverit, divinitus adjutus poterit invenire.* Cons. Evang. 2, 21, 52; P. L. 34, 1102. Cf. *ibid. Unusquisque eorum potuerit voluerit ve narrare.*

[105] *Eo loco id ponendum judicavit, quo divina inspiratione suggestum est.* Cons. Evang. 3, 13, 48; P. L. 34, 1187.

[106] *Ibid.* col. 1188.

[107] *Quam* [*Scripturam*] *legentes nihil aliud appetunt quam cogitationes voluntatemque illorum a quibus conscripta est, invenire, et per illas voluntatem Dei, secundum quam tales homines locutos credimus.* Doct. Christ. 2, 5, 6; P. L. 34, 38. Cf. *ibid.* 3, 27, 38; col. 80. In this same work (4, 7, 21), the sacred writers are said to speak with divine eloquence, yet (*ibid.* 4, 20, 39-40) they are described as leaving the impress of their own human eloquence on what they write. Cf. Pesch, C., *De Inspir. S. Scrip.* 487-489.

gelists he asserts a constant consciousness of their guidance by God, under inspiration. "Each of the Evangelists believed it to have been his duty to relate the matters he was engaged in recording, in that order in which it pleased God to bring them to his recollection." [108] And again says St. Augustine, "Matthew followed the authority of the Holy Ghost, under whose guidance he felt his mind to be directed more than is the case with us." [109] Whether St. Augustine believed that all the sacred writers were conscious of their own inspiration cannot, in the absence of his statements in this matter, be determined. He indeed requires "a certain spiritual disposition of soul in order that man become a participant of the divine influence, but this disposition is *veritas, veracitas, fidelitas, sanctitas animae.*" [110] Yet on the other hand truth is so powerful that it presses into service both the good and the wicked (Balaam, Num. 24: Caiphas, John 11, 49 sq.). For this influence of God, however, St. Augustine does not use the word *inspiratio,* but speaks of an *occulta vox* and an *arcanus instinctus.*" [111]

It remains to say a word concerning St. Augustine's position regarding the multiplicity of sense in Scripture. It is commonly asserted that St. Augustine admitted a multiple literal sense in Scripture, but those who ascribe this opinion to him generally hasten to qualify it in some way. Thus Portalié says: "Augustine was the first to affirm the plurality of the literal sense in Scripture. He did not affirm it absolutely. This theory would have been fatal

[108] Cons. Evang. 2, 21, 51; P. L. 34, 1102. *Unusquisque Evangelistarum eo se ordine credidit debuisse narrare, quo voluisset Deus ea ipsa, quae narrabat, ejus recordationi suggerere.*

[109] *Ibid.* 3, 7, 30; P. L. 34, 1175. *Nisi cogitaret* [*Matthaeus*] *recordationi suae, quae sancto Spiritu regebatur, non frustra occurrisse aliud pro alio nomen prophetae . . . sequens auctoritatem Spiritus sancti, a quo mentem suam regi plus nobis ille utique sentiebat.*

[110] Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 73. Cf. Cons. Evang. 2, 70, 136; P. L. 34, 1144; *ibid.* 3, 13, 48; col. 1188; *ibid.* 3, 25, 71; col. 1205; Civ. Dei 11, 4, 1; P. L. 41, 319.

[111] Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 73-74. Cf. Cons. Evang. 2, 70, 136-137. On John 19, 22 St. Augustine remarks: *O ineffabilem vim divinae operationis, etiam in cordibus ignorantium! Nonne occulta vox quaedam Pilato intus quodam, si dici potest, clamoso silentio personabat, quod tanto ante in Psalmorum litteris prophetatum est, "ne corrumpas tituli inscriptionem"* In Evang. Joan. T. 117, 5; P. L. 35, 1946.

to exegesis had it prevailed." [112] Bardenhewer makes a similar assertion. "It is Augustine who first puts forth the idea of a *multiplex sensus litteralis.* He maintains or at least surmises, that whatever truth can be found in a phrase of Holy Scripture, was then and there intended by the sacred writer, or rather by the Holy Spirit. Were this true scientific exegesis would be impossible. Augustine puts it forth only as his own opinion and not as one shared by the majority of his contemporaries; very often, moreover he tacitly abandons it." [113]

With F. Talon, however, we prefer to believe "that Augustine never conceived the literal sense of the Scriptures differently from the whole of Patristic tradition." [114] This may perhaps be best shown by examining the passages of Augustine which are cited in support of a multiple literal sense, and that in the order of their appearance, as he himself would have desired. For he freely admitted that some of his earlier views underwent a change in later life.[115]

In his *Confessions* [116] St. Augustine says that the human author, who, in the case under discussion, was Moses, foresaw all the possible truths which could be found in his words, and that he thought of them as he wrote. "He, [Moses], surely, when he wrote those words, perceived and thought whatever of truth we have been able to discover in them, yea, and whatever we have not been able, nor yet are able, though still it may be found in them." [117] But he has hardly made this statement when the extravagance of it causes him to modify it considerably. He is not so certain that the human author intended or foresaw all the true meanings to be put upon

[112] *Inspiration,* D. T. C. vol. 7, col. 2121. St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.* IIa, IIae, Q. CLXXI a. 5.

[113] *Patrology* 490. Cf. Pesch, C., *De Inspir. S. Scrip.* 116-120; Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 79-80.

[114] *La Doctrine de St. Thomas sur le Sens Littéral des Écritures,* R. B. vol. 34 (1926), 49.

[115] Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 495. Cf. Retract. Prol. 3; P. L. 32, 585; Persev. 21, 55; P. L. 45, 1027; Praedest. 4, 8; P. L. 44, 965.

[116] 12, 31, 42; P. L. 32, 844, written about 400 A. D., Bardenhewer, O., *op. cit.* 473.

[117] *Sensit ille omnino in his verbis, atque cogitavit cum ea scriberet, quidquid hic veri potuimus invenire. Loc. cit.*

his words. God knew them, but perhaps the human author only thought of one meaning.

O Lord, who art God, if man sees anything less in these words, can anything which Thou wert to reveal in them remain hidden to Thy good Spirit, although he through whom they were spoken, amid the many interpretations that might have been found, perchance fixed on but one?[118] Which, if it be so, let that which he thought on be more exalted than the rest. But to us, O Lord, either point out the same, or any other true one which may be pleasing to Thee; so that whether Thou makest known to us that which Thou didst to that man of Thine, or some other by occasion of the same words, yet Thou mayest feed us, and not error deceive us.[119]

Even granting that St. Augustine asserts that Moses knew and intended all the true meanings which in future ages could be found in his words, one cannot fail to remark that Augustine's language is entirely general, and that he does not say that these many meanings are all literal ones. There is still room, consequently to see in these words of St. Augustine an admission that there are many mystical or applied senses in Scripture in addition to the one true literal sense. Such an interpretation of his words harmonizes with his exegetical principles elsewhere, and with his ordinary practice.[120]

Still less justification for Augustine's teaching of a multiple literal sense is to be found in the passages cited from *De Doctrina Christiana.* His position on the multiple sense of Scripture is expressed more clearly here than in his *Confessions.* He writes:

[118] *Etiamsi ille per quem dicta sunt, unam fortassis ex multis veris sententiam cogitavit?* Conf. 12, 32, 43; P. L. 32, 844.

[119] *Ibid.* Cf. *ibid.* 12, 31, 42; col. 844. "Thus, when one shall say, he [Moses] meant as I do, and another, nay, but as I do; I suppose that I am speaking more religiously when I say, why not rather as both, if both be true? And if there be a third truth, or a fourth, and if anyone seek any truth altogether different in those words, why may not he be believed to have seen all these, through whom one God has tempered the Holy Scriptures to the senses of many about to see therein things true but different?"

[120] Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 490. Cf. Conf. 13, 18, 27; P. L. 32, 836.

When, again, not some one interpretation, but two or more interpretations are put on the same words of Scripture,[121] even though the meaning the writer intended remain undiscovered (*etiamsi latet quid senserit, ille qui scripsit*), there is no danger if it can be shown from other passages of Scripture, that any of the interpretations put on the words is in harmony with the truth. The student of the divine Scriptures, nevertheless, should strive to discover the will of the author, by whom the Holy Ghost composed that Scripture. Whether he succeeds in this endeavor, or whether he draws different meanings from the words, but one not opposed to sound doctrine, he is free from blame so long as he is supported by the testimony of some other passages of Scripture.[122]

Here St. Augustine presupposes that the sacred writer intended his words to convey one meaning. Commentators, however, by reason of the obscurity of the words have put upon them various interpretations, which interpretations may be held as truthful in themselves, even though they do not represent the meaning intended by the writer, so long as they are in agreement with the other statements of Scripture. Consequently when in the concluding sentence of this text, St. Augustine says that perhaps the sacred writer foresaw these meanings, and that the Holy Ghost did foresee them and even intended them, his words must be understood in keeping with the context. His concluding sentence is:

For the author perhaps saw (*forsitan vidit*) that this very meaning lay in the words which we are trying to interpret, and assuredly the Holy Spirit, who through him spoke these words, foresaw that this interpretation would occur to the reader (*Dei Spiritus, qui per eum haec operatus est . . . praevidit*),—nay, made provision that it should occur to him, seeing that it too is founded on truth. For what more liberal and more fruitful provision could God have made in regard to the sacred Scriptures, than that the same words might be understood in several senses, all of which are sanctioned by the concurring testimony of other passages equally divine? (*Nam quid in divinis eloquiis largius et uberius potuit divinitus provideri, quam ut eadem verba*

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[121] He is expressly speaking of the obscure passages of Scripture. Cf. *op. cit.* 3, 27, 38; P. L. 34, 80; and 3, 28, 39.

[122] *Id tamen eo conante, qui divina scrutatur eloquia, ut ad voluntatem perveniatur auctoris, per quem Scripturam illam operatus est Spiritus. Ibid.*

pluribus intelligantur modis, quos alia non minus divina contestantia faciant approbari?)[123]

In a word then, St. Augustine's position comes to this, that the various interpretations put upon obscure passages in Scripture can be admitted as true, so long as they are in agreement with other revealed truth, but at the same time no one of them may actually be the one—the literal one—intended by the sacred author. We therefore do not understand St. Augustine to teach a multiple literal sense in Scripture, nor do we consider his position on the divine profundity of thought in Scripture as different from the rest of Christian antiquity.

St. Augustine's statements respecting the multiple sense of Scripture have been treated here less for settling the controversy as to his teaching on the multiple sense of Scripture than for their bearing on his concept of inspiration. For no matter which side one may take in the controversy, one is forced to admit that his words are in agreement with what has already been said of his concept of man under the influence of inspiration.

The thought that God should have used man as an instrument, that God should have made the sacred authors write truths without the latter having any idea of the significance and extent of what they wrote, this seemed to Augustine to be something unworthy, both of the inspiring God, and the inspired man, because Sacred Scripture is according to his teaching not only entirely the work of God, but also entirely the work of man.[124]

In concluding our study of St. Augustine's concept of inspiration we may say with H. Vogels, that "a completely developed concept of inspiration, clear in every respect, is not to be found in St. Augustine." [125] On the other hand, St. Augustine does tell us much about inspiration, and we cannot help noting that his concept of inspiration is essentially the same as that held by Catholics

[123] *Ibid.* n. 38. Cf. Civ. Dei 11, 19; P. L. 41, 332; also *St. Augustine*, by a Priest of the Cong. of Miss. 415-416.

[124] Vogels, *op. cit.* 80. Cf. R. B. vol. 18 (1909), 301.

[125] *Op. cit.* 79. Cf. Rivière, M. J., *De L'Accord Des Évangélistes*; R. C. F. vol. 61 (1910), 430-431; Talmont, L., *Les Principes exégetiques de l'Augustin*, R. A. vol. 16 (1910), 749-750.

today. For him inspiration is a special influence of the Holy Ghost on the will, intellect and executive faculties of the sacred writer,—an influence impelling him to write, illuminating and directing his intellectual processes, and assisting him while writing. The Holy Ghost, who fills the sacred writers with His presence, who operates in them and by them in the composition of Scripture, does not, however, take away man's power of action, but rather operates in keeping with the powers and capabilities of human nature. The human authors remain men and enjoy the free exercise of their faculties under divine influence. But it is apparent throughout his writings that he is more concerned with stating the fact that the Bible is inspired, and that it has a twofold simultaneous authorship, that the grace of inspiration guided and directed the faculties of the human writer, without destroying human liberty, than he is with evolving any system or particular theory of inspiration. One hesitates, therefore, to claim the authority of St. Augustine for any one theory of inspiration. If he had a theory, it would seem to have been dynamic rather than anything else. For he viewed the sacred authors as being filled with the divine grace of inspiration, which operated in them and upon their intellectual powers and faculties, with the result that man became a divinely energized instrument for the composition of Scripture.

CHAPTER II

Extent of Inspiration

§ I. Extent of Inspiration in General

The fundamental thesis of Catholic scholars such as Lenormant,[1] D'Hulst,[2] Salvatore di Bartolo,[3] that inspiration is limited to matters of faith and morals in Scripture, was adopted by them with the view of meeting the objections of the modern historico-critical school. Their attempt, however, to restrict the inspiration of Scripture to certain parts or statements of it finds no support in the writings of St. Augustine, who taught that everything in Scripture was written under divine inspiration. His words to the Manicheans can with equal force be directed to them. "Let them know that *everything* both in the Old as well as in the New Testament was written and commended by the one Holy Spirit."[4] The inspiration of the historical statements of Scripture is not only to be inferred as a logical conclusion from this general assertion, but is also specifically taught by St. Augustine, in whom the inspiration of the history in the Bible finds an energetic defender. The historical accounts given in Genesis are inspired.[5] Genesis and Ecclesiasticus are one and the same Scripture, because they were written under the inspiration of the same Spirit of truth.[6] The history of Joseph in Egypt related in Exodus is written by divine inspiration.[7] It is the same Holy Spirit who inspired the historical book of Exodus and the poetical Psalm 104. Hence what is written in both has the same divine authority.[8]

[1] *Les origines de l'histoire d'apres la Bible et les Traditions des Peuple orientaux*, Paris, 1880-1884.

[2] *La Question Biblique*, Paris, 1893.

[3] *Criteri teologici*, Turin, 1888.

[4] C. Adim. 3, 3; P. L. 42, 134; cf. Util. Cred. 6, 13; P. L. 42, 74; C. Adv. L. 2, 5, 19; P. L. 42, 649.

[5] Ep. ad Gal. 40; P. L. 35, 2133; cf. Civ. Dei 15, 8, 1; P. L. 41, 446.

[6] Gen. ad Litt. 4, 34, 53; P. L. 34. 319.

[7] En. in Ps. 104. 14; P. L. 37, 1398.

[8] *Ibid.* 27, col. 1400.

§ II. The Inerrancy of Scripture

1. *Scripture is not only true, but it is impossible as well for it to be false or contradictory.*

There is no point of doctrine more plainly asserted or more vigorously defended by St. Augustine, than the absence of falsehood and error from the divine Scriptures. To Faustus, the Manichean, he confesses that he is active in defending the truth of Scripture, not only against pagans, but against Manicheans as well.[9] If he repeats so frequently that it is impossible for Scripture to be mistaken, or false in its statements,[10] that Scripture actually is not mistaken or false,[11] but true,[12] he does so because he knows that the inerrancy of Scripture results inexorably from the doctrine of inspiration itself. For since God is the author of Scripture it is impossible for Him to be the author of what is not true. "O Lord, is not this Thy Scripture true, because Thou hast given it, who art truthful and truth itself?"[13] "This Scripture [Genesis] . . . and that [Ecclus.] is true . . . because it has been written under the inspiration of the one Spirit of truth."[14] Indeed inerrancy is so intimately bound up with inspiration that an inspired book cannot assert what is not true. Consequently any book for which inspiration is claimed, and which is found to contain errors, is for that very reason rejected as not inspired.[15]

[9] C. Faust. 22, 16; P. L. 42, 408.

[10] *Scriptura mendax esse non potest.* Sermo 257, 2; P. L. 38, 1194. Cf. *ibid.* 71, 12, 19; col. 454; Quaest, Hept. 1; Q. 72; P. L. 34, 567; Ep. 130, 14, 25; P. L. 33, 504; Ep. 199, 7, 21; col. 912; En. in Ps. 105, 30; P. L. 37, 1414.

[11] *Neque enim divina Scriptura fallit aut fallitur.* Pat. 26, 22; P. L. 40, 623; cf. Pecc. Mer. 1, 22, 33; P. L. 44, 128; Quaest. Hept. 1, Q. 119; P. L. 34, 579.

[12] *Omnia enim quae in Vetere scripta sunt, nos et vera esse dicimus et divinitus mandata.* C. Faust. 10, 3; P. L. 42, 244; *ibid.* 32, 8; col. 501; 32, 14; col. 505; Civ. Dei 12, 9, 2; P. L. 41, 357; C. Pelag. 4, 10, 28; P. L. 44, 630.

[13] Conf. 13, 29, 44; P. L. 32, 864.

[14] Gen. ad Litt. 4, 34, 53; P. L. 34, 319; Civ. Dei 19, 4, 1; P. L. 41, 627; *ibid.* 20, 30, 5; P. L. 41, 708; *ibid.* 21, 7, 1; col. 719.

[15] Cons. Evang. 1, 1, 1; P. L. 34, 1043.

Moreover it is impossible for Scripture to contain contradictory statements. One book of Scripture cannot contradict another, nor can the same author contradict himself. And it is the duty of the interpreter to see to it that in his explanation of Scripture he does not make it appear that Scripture contradicts itself, a thing which is impossible.[16] There are apparent contradictions in Scripture, and in his work *De Consensu Evangelistarum* St. Augustine endeavors to prove that the accounts contained in the four Gospels are in no way contradictory, and he succeeds admirably in his task. Referring, in his work, *In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus,* to this great labor undertaken by him in defense of Scriptural truth, Augustine says that in it he has shown how the Evangelists agree in their various accounts, and in no way contradict one another. If one desires to know how they all agree he can find it out by reading his book on the subject. But,—and this is most important, —whether or not one is able to devote the time and effort to such a personal study, " he must first of all believe before he finds it out by his own reading and research that there is nothing written by any Evangelist, as far as regards those who have been received by the Church into canonical authority, that can be contrary to his own or another's equally true narration." [17]

The inerrancy of Scripture is, therefore, a dogmatic principle which we are to bring with us to the reading, investigation and study of Scripture. And it is the one which serves to guide St. Augustine himself in all his attempts to reconcile and harmonize the statements of the four Evangelists. He admits no principle of harmonization as tenable which would in any way attribute falsity or contradiction to the sacred writers. " It is only fitting that every kind of falsity be far removed from the Evangelist, not only that kind of falsity which comes by the positive telling of what is un-

[16] *Ne per imperitiam nostram divina Scriptura, quod fieri non potest, a se dissentire videatur.* Serm. Mont. 1, 22, 76; P. L. 34, 1267.

[17] *Credat tamen antequam sciat . . . nihil ab aliquo Evangelista esse conscriptum, quantum ad hos attinet quos in auctoritatem canonicam recepit Ecclesia, quod vel ipsius vel alterius non minus veraci narrationi possit esse contrarium. Op. cit.* T. 112, 1; P. L. 35, 1930. Cf. Enchir. 68; P. L. 40, 264; Civ. Dei 16, 16; P. L. 41, 496; Ep. 147, 5, 14; P. L. 33, 602.

true, but also that which arises from forgetfulness." [18] "For we are not at all at liberty either to suppose or to say that any Evangelist has made any false statement." [19]

The differences and omissions noticeable in the four Evangelists do not involve any antagonism or contradiction, for each follows his own plan. One endeavors to be more concise, another to be more complete, but all are in agreement, inasmuch as they present the same truth in different words. These are the lines along which St. Augustine sought to harmonize the statements of the Evangelists. They appear all through his work *De Consensu Evangelistarium,* but nowhere more clearly than in Chapter 12, of Book 2, where he compares the accounts of the life, mission, and preaching of John the Baptist as given by the four Evangelists.

His position on this matter is also well summarized elsewhere in a reply to Faustus, the Manichean:

> Faustus finds contradictions in the Gospels. Say rather, that Faustus reads the Gospels in the wrong spirit, that he is too foolish to understand, and too blind to see. If you were animated with piety instead of being misled by party spirit, you might easily, by examining these passages, discover a wonderful and most instructive harmony among the writers. Who, in reading two narratives of the same event, would think of charging one or both of the authors with error or falsehood, because one omits what the other mentions, or one tells concisely, but with substantial agreement, what the other relates in detail, so as to indicate not only what was done, but also how it was done? This is what Faustus does in his attempt to impeach the truth of the Gospels; as if Luke's omitting some saying of Christ recorded in Matthew implied a denial on the part of Luke of Matthew's statement.[20]

A true Christian cannot doubt or question the truth of Scripture, because the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture is such a fundamental article of Christianity that one cannot be a Christian or be

[18] *Omnem autem falsitatem abesse ab Evangelistis decet, non solum eam quae mentiendo promitur, sed etiam eam quae obliviscendo.* Cons. Evang. 2, 12, 29; col. 1091.

[19] *Cum enim fas non sit Evangelistarum aliquem mentitum fuisse, vel existimare vel dicere. Ibid.* n. 28; col. 1091.

[20] C. Faust. 33, 7; P. L. 42, 515.

saved without accepting it.[21] And only an infidel or one steeped in sin would deny it.[22] Hence when proof is adduced from Scripture the Christian must accept it as true. "I am forced to believe these examples to be true," says St. Augustine, "because they are there written where I cannot say what is written is false.[23]

The true Christian will therefore not accuse the author of any book of the Old or New Testament of error, but will, whenever an insoluble difficulty presents itself, admit either that the copy is faulty, or that the translator has made a mistake, or that he himself does not understand. This is the principle that St. Augustine sets before Faustus,[24] and which he himself followed, as he informs Jerome.

If in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the manuscript is faulty, or that the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand. As to all other writings however great the superiority of the authors to myself in sanctity and learning, I do not accept their teaching as true on the ground of the opinion being held by them, but only because they have succeeded in convincing my judgment of its truth, either by means of these canonical writings themselves, or by arguments addressed to my reason. . . . I do not need to say that I do not suppose you wish your books to be read like those of the prophets or of the Apostles, concerning which it would be wrong to doubt that they are free from error.[25]

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[21] *Credimus . . . quia sic scriptum est in ea Scriptura, cui nisi crediderimus, nec christiani nec salvi esse poterimus. Ibid.* 26, 7; col. 483; cf. *ibid. cap.* 3-6.

[22] *Quam [Scripturam] esse veracem nemo dubitat nisi infidelis aut impius.* Gen. ad Litt. 7, 28, 42; P. L. 34, 371.

[23] Unit. Eccl. 13, 33; P. L. 43, 416. Cf. *Et cum eum (auctorem) veridicum credimus nihil quod falsum esse vel novimus vel putamus, audemus eum existimare dixisse.* Conf. 12, 18, 27; P. L. 32, 836; Bapt. 2, 3, 4; P. L. 43, 128; *Quis autem nesciat sanctam Scripturam canonicam, tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti, certis suis terminis contineri, eamque omnibus posterioribus episcoporum litteris ita praeponi, ut de illa omnino dubitari et disceptari non possit, utrum verum vel utrum rectum sit, quidquid in ea scriptum esse constiterit.*

[24] C. Faust. 11, 5; P. L. 42, 249.

[25] Ep. 82, 1, 3; P. L. 33, 277.

An objection to St. Augustine's doctrine of biblical inerrancy presents itself from a solution offered by him in *De Consensu Evangelistarum*[26] of Matthew's quotation of a passage of the prophet Zacharias as that of Jeremias. The verse in Matthew (27, 9) reads: *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying, "and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was prized of the children of Israel."* In the course of his explanation for the presence of the name of Jeremias in place of that of Zacharias, St. Augustine says:

> For it may have been the case, that when Matthew was engaged in composing his Gospel, the word Jeremias came to his mind, in accordance with familiar experience, instead of Zacharias, which nevertheless he would have corrected (having his attention called to it by others, who might have read it while he was still alive in the flesh), had it not occurred to his mind, which was governed by the Holy Ghost, that it was not without a purpose that the name of one prophet had come to his memory instead of the other, for this would not have happened unless it had been the Lord's purpose to have it written.[27]

These words of St. Augustine have been cited to show that he explained the presence of the name Jeremias for that of Zacharias on the grounds that Matthew suffered a lapse of memory and confused the two names.[28] This is to make Augustine say that Matthew wrote one name in place of the other as the result of an error of memory. St. Augustine, however, makes no such assertion. The whole burden of his argument is to show that what seems to be an error, is in reality no error. It is no error, first of all, because God intended that he should write the name of Jeremias for that of Zacharias. "How, then, is the matter to be explained, but by supposing that this has been done in accordance with the more

[26] 3, 7, 28-30; P. L. 34, 1174 sq.

[27] *Potuit enim fieri ut animo Matthaei Evangelium conscribentis pro Zacharia Jeremias occurreret, ut fieri solet, quod tamen sine ulla dubitatione emendaret, saltem ab aliis admonitus, qui ipso adhuc in carne vivente hoc legere potuerunt, nisi cogitaret recordationi suae, quae sancto Spiritu regebatur, non frustra occurrisse aliud pro alio nomen prophetae, nisi quia ita Dominus hoc scribi constituit.* Cons. Evang. 3, 7, 30; P. L. 34, 1175.

[28] Cf. Portalié, E., *Augustin*, D. T. C., vol. 1, 2342; Vogels, H., *St. Augustins Schrift De Cons. Evang.* 69-71.

secret counsel of God's Providence, by which the minds of the Evangelists were governed?" [29] In the next place, it is no error, because Matthew who could have corrected it later on, did not do so. The fact that he did not correct it shows that it was no error.

In the very attempt to show that St. Matthew *actually* made no error, Augustine seems to admit that it would have been *possible* for him to do so under divine inspiration. It is this which creates the difficulty. Certainly St. Augustine could have expressed his thought more carefully, but if any doubt remain as to his real position on the matter, it is to be removed by the clearer testimony of other passages in his writings. In this very same work *De Consensu Evangelistarum* he has already said that "it is only fitting that every kind of falsity be far removed from the Evangelist, not only that which comes from the positive telling of what is untrue, but also that which comes from forgetfulness." [30] Were St. Augustine to admit even the possibility of error on the part of St. Matthew it would bring him into insoluble contradiction with his own views as expressed to Jerome, that the sacred authors have neither made a mistake, nor is it possible for them to do so.[31]

Nor is God to be charged with error in suggesting the name Jeremias in place of that of Zacharias. Augustine leaves it to be understood that God does not inspire errors. He inspires what is true, and the truth of Matthew's statement lies in the significance God wished to have attached to this substitution of the name of one prophet for the other. God wished to show thereby the complete harmony which exists among the different utterances of all the prophets, and to teach men to accept and regard the statements of the individual prophets as the property of all of them, and the statements of all of them as the property of each.

> If it is asked, however, why the Lord should have so determined it, there is this first and most serviceable reason . . . namely, that some idea was thus conveyed of the marvellous manner in which all the holy

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[29] *Quid ergo intelligendum est, nisi hoc actum esse secretiore consilio providentiae Dei, qua mentes Evangelistarum sunt gubernatae?* Cons. Evang. 3, 7, 30; P. L. 34, 1175.

[30] *Op. cit.* 2, 12, 29; col. 1091. Cf. Vogels, H., *op. cit.* 71.

[31] Ep. 82, 3, 24; P. L. 33, 286.

prophets, speaking in one spirit, continued in perfect agreement with each other in their utterances. . . . The same consideration might also fitly suggest the duty of accepting unhesitatingly whatever the Holy Ghost has given expression to through the agency of the prophets, and so of looking upon their individual communications as also those of the whole body, and on their collective communications as also those of each separately. If, then, as is the case that words spoken by Jeremias are really as much Zacharias' as Jeremias', and on the other hand, that words spoken by Zacharias are really as much Jeremias' as they are Zacharias', what necessity was there for Matthew to correct his text when he read over what he had written and found that the one name had occurred to him instead of the other? Was it not rather the proper course for him to bow to the authority of the Holy Ghost under whose guidance he certainly felt his mind to be placed in a more decided manner than is the case with us (*ac non potius sequens auctoritatem Spiritus sancti, a quo mentem suam regi plus nobis, ille utique sentiebat*), and consequently to leave untouched what he had thus written, in accordance with the Lord's counsel and appointment, with the intent to give us to understand that the prophets maintain so complete a harmony with each other in the matter of their utterances that it is not absurd, but in fact, a most consistent thing for us to credit Jeremias with a sentence originally spoken by Zacharias? [32]

As M. J. Rivière says,[33] "here, where the unbelieving exult, where the ignorant are scandalized, he [St. Augustine] finds a new proof of the truth and divinity of Scripture." Nevertheless St. Augustine himself felt that this explanation was inadequate, and he immediately hastens to add another. It is that Matthew is making two quotations from two different prophets, but gives them as one. Jeremias speaks of the field, (Mt. 27, 10), and Zacharias of the thirty pieces of silver (Mt. 27, 9). Matthew, however, only mentions the name of Jeremias.[34]

Nor are these two solutions the only ones that St. Augustine has given here to free St. Matthew from the charge of error. Before offering them he had already shown that it was possible to absolve St. Matthew from all charge of error by means of textual criti-

[32] Cons. Evang. 3, 7, 30. Cf. Pesch, C., *De Inspir. S. Scrip.* 114.
[33] R. C. F., *De L'Accord Des Évangélistes* 61 (1910), 430.
[34] Cons. Evang. 3, 7, 31; P. L. 34, 1176.

cism.[35] All the MSS and codices did not contain the name Jeremias. In fact, the name of no prophet was given, and the text simply read: *then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophet.*

Now, if anyone, [says St. Augustine], finds a difficulty in the circumstance that this passage is not found in the writings of the prophet Jeremias, and thinks that damage is thus done to the veracity of the Evangelist, let him first take notice of the fact that this ascription of the passage to Jeremias is not contained in all the codices of the Gospels, and that some of them state simply that it was spoken *by the prophet.*[36]

No doubt the true solution of this difficulty lies in the field of textual criticism, but St. Augustine preferred not to use this argument, because the codices which had the name Jeremias were more numerous and ancient, and besides he felt that a scribe would more readily expunge the name Jeremias from the text to solve a difficulty, than insert it to create one.

It is possible, therefore, to affirm that those codices deserve rather to be followed which do not contain the name of Jeremias. . . . However, let others adopt this method of defense, if they are so minded. For my part, I am not satisfied with it; and the reason is, that a majority of codices contain the name of Jeremias, and that those critics who have studied the Gospel with more than usual care in the Greek copies, bear witness that they have found it in the more ancient Greek exemplars. I look also to this further consideration, namely that there was no reason why this name should have been added, and a corruption thus created; whereas there was certainly an intelligible reason for erasing the name from some of the codices. For unashamed inexperience might readily have done that when perplexed with the problem presented by the fact that this passage could not be found in Jeremias.[37]

While St. Augustine cannot admit that the writers of Scripture have made mistakes, he does admit that there are errors in the codices of Scripture due to copyists. In some cases the corruptions of the text were made intentionally, and in others they are due to carelessness. He complains that even in his day numbers especi-

[35] *Ibid.* 3, 7, 29; col. 1174-75. [36] *Ibid.* [37] *Ibid.*

ally were carelessly transcribed, and even more carelessly corrected.[38]

2. *Controversy with St. Jerome.*

The inerrancy of Scripture is defended with special vigor by St. Augustine in his well known controversy with St. Jerome, over the latter's interpretation of Gal. 2, 11-15.[39] It is not that Jerome denied the inerrancy of Scripture. On the contrary he explicitly admitted and taught it.[40] He asserts that it is impious to say that the Scriptures err,[41] or that they make a mistake even in a name,[42] yet in his interpretation of the passage of Galatians referred to, he gives an explanation which is not consistent with the doctrine of Scriptural inerrancy. St. Jerome maintains [43] that he merely copied his explanation of the incident at Antioch from Origen, without adopting it himself, and that it was his intention to allow the readers of his commentary to approve or reject it. Nevertheless he strongly defends this borrowed interpretation against St. Augustine. According to it, Paul did not really rebuke Peter. Peter's conduct was justifiable, but it had created wrong impressions. In order to correct these false impressions in the minds of the Jewish and Gentile Christians in the Church of Antioch, a dramatic incident was arranged by the two Apostles. Paul was to pretend to give Peter a rebuke in public. And from this rebuke the Christians would learn that the Mosaic observances were no longer necessary for them, or in any way binding upon them. Such an interpretation, St. Augustine says, is at variance

[38] *Diversitas numerorum aliter se habentium in codicibus graecis et latinis, aliter in hebraeis, . . . nec malitiae Judaeorum, nec diligentiae vel prudentiae Septuaginta interpretum, sed scriptoris tribuatur errori, qui de bibliotheca supradicti regis codicem describendum primus accepit. Nam etiam nunc, . . . numeri . . . et negligenter describuntur, et negligentius emendantur.* Civ. Dei 15, 13, 2; P. L. 41, 453; cf. *ibid.* 1, col. 452.

[39] P. L. 26, 339.

[40] Ep. 18, 7; P. L. 22, 366; Ep. 36, 11; *ibid.* col. 458; Ep. 46, 6; *ibid.* col. 486; Ep. 72, 2; *ibid.* col. 674; Ep. 82, 7; *ibid.* col. 740. Cf. *Sp. Paraclitus*, A. A. S., vol. XII, 392.

[41] In Nahum, 1, 9; P. L. 25, 1238; In Jer. 31, 35; P. L. 24, 885.

[42] Ep. 57, 7; P. L. 22, 572.

[43] Ep. 75, 3, 6; P. L. 33, 252.

with the account given by St. Paul, and would cast doubt on his veracity. If the affair at Antioch is merely stage play, then St. Paul is writing what is not true, when he says that he reproved Peter because his conduct was really blameworthy.[44] In his defense of the truth of St. Paul's Statement, St. Augustine gives us his finest and most forceful expressions of the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture.

It seems to me, that the most disastrous consequences must follow upon our believing that anything false is found in the sacred books; that is to say, that the men by whom the Scriptures have been written and given to us, could state anything false in their books. It is one question whether it may be at any time the duty of a good man to lie, but it is another question whether it can have been the duty of a writer of Holy Scripture to say what is false; nay it is not another question, —it is no question at all. For if you once admit into such a high sanctuary of authority one officious lie [one false statement made in the way of duty], there will not be left a single sentence of those books, which, if appearing to any one difficult in practice or hard to believe, may not by the same destructive rule be explained away, as a statement in which the author intentionally and under a sense of duty declared what was not true.[45]

If Jerome should be tempted to make as his reply that:

[44] Moriarty, P., *Life of St. Augustine*, 297-300.

[45] *Mihi enim videtur exitiosissime credi, aliquod in Libris sanctis haberi mendacium; id est eos homines, per quos nobis illa Scriptura ministrata est atque conscripta, aliquid in libris suis fuisse mentitos. Alia quippe quaestio est, sitne aliquando mentiri viri boni; et alia quaestio est utrum scriptorem sanctarum Scripturarum mentiri oportuerit: imo vero non alia, sed nulla quaestio est. Admisso enim semel in tantum auctoritatis fastigium officioso aliquo mendacio, nulla illorum librorum particula remanebit, quae non ut cuique videbitur vel ad mores difficilis vel ad fidem incredibilis, eadem perniciosissima regula ad mentientis auctoris consilium officiumque referatur.* Ep. 28, 3, 3; P. L. 33, 112-113. The statement that if it be once admitted that the authors of Scripture could write one false statement, one officious lie, no sentence of Scripture will be safe from a similar charge, and that consequently the whole authority of Scripture will be destroyed, since men will believe and reject what they wish, is found frequently in his correspondence with Jerome, and also in his work C. Faustum. Cf. Ep. 28, 3, 5; Ep. 40, 3, 3; col. 155; *ibid.* 4, 7; col. 157. C. Faust. 11, 5; P. L. 42, 249.

It is better to believe that Paul wrote what was not true, than to believe that Peter did what was not right, then on this principle, we must say,—which far be it from us to say,—that it is better to believe that the Gospel history is false, than to believe that Christ was denied by Peter; and better to charge the Books of Kings with false statements than to believe that so great a prophet . . . as David . . . committed adultery . . . and murder.[46]

Jerome, however, does make the statement that it is incredible that Paul should have rebuked in Peter what he himself had done. And to this, Augustine replies, that he is not defending Paul's actions, but the truth of his written statements.

I am not at present inquiring about what Paul did, but about what he wrote. This it is which is most pertinent to the matter which I have in hand, namely, to show that the truth of the divine Scriptures . . . in every way remains unimpaired and unquestionable.[47] For whoever does what he ought to do, walks uprightly. He, therefore, is guilty of falsehood, who, knowing that another has done what he ought to have done, says that he has not done uprightly. If, then, Paul wrote what was true, it is true that Peter was not then walking uprightly, according to the Gospel. He was, therefore, doing what he ought not to have done; and if Paul had himself done something of the same kind, I would prefer to believe that, having been himself corrected, he could not omit the correction of his brother Apostle, than to believe that he put down any false statement in his Epistle (*quam mendaciter aliquid in sua Epistola posuisse*).[48]

As the interpretation of this passage of Galatians proposed by St. Jerome rises and falls with the acceptance or rejection of the principle of Scriptural inerrancy, it cannot be accepted by St. Augustine. It is in opposition to the Catholic teaching subscribed to by him, as well as by Jerome himself, namely, that the authors of Scripture neither have made, nor is it possible for them to

[46] Ep. 82, 2, 7; P. L. 33, 277.

[47] *Non nunc inquiro quid fecerit; quid scripserit quaero; hoc ad quaestionem quam suscepi, maxime pertinet; ut veritas divinarum Scripturarum . . . ex omni parte verax atque indubitanda persistat. Ibid.* col. 278. Cf. Ep. 130, 14, 25; P. L. 33, 504.

[48] Ep. 82, 2, 7; P. L. 33, 278.

make, false statements in their writings. Augustine makes a threefold repetition of his belief on this point in this same *Letter 82* to Jerome:

I confess to your Charity, that it is to those books of scripture alone, which are now called canonical, that I have learned to pay such respect and honor, that I most firmly believe that no author of them erred in any statement which he wrote (*ut nullum eorum auctorem scribendo aliquid errasse firmissime credam*).[49]

I leave him who is of this opinion [namely, that a Christian may sometimes lie], to judge for himself the circumstances in which he is at liberty to utter a lie, provided, however, that it be most firmly believed and maintained that falsehood is altogether absent from the authors who wrote the Holy Scriptures, and especially the canonical Scriptures.[50]

Although, as I have said just a little previously, it is to the canonical Scriptures alone that I am bound to give such implicit submission as to follow them alone in the belief that their authors neither have written any false statement at all in them, nor could have written anything that is not true.[51]

It was with considerable satisfaction that St. Augustine was later able to write to Oceanus telling him that St. Jerome had accepted his views in this matter.

This question [the rebuke of Peter at Antioch] the venerable father Jerome and I have discussed fully in letters which we have exchanged, and in the last work which he published against Pelagius under the name of *Critobulus,* he has maintained the same opinion concerning that event, and the sayings of the Apostles, as I myself had adopted following the blessed Cyprian.[52]

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[49] Ep. 82, 1, 3; P. L. 33, 277.

[50] *Sed haec ut dixi, et alia et magna quaestio est; eligat quod voluerit, qui hoc existimat, ubi mentiatur; dum tamen a scribentibus auctoribus sanctarum Scripturarum, et maxime canonicarum, inconcusse credatur et defendatur omnino abesse mendacium. Ibid.* 2, 22; col. 285.

[51] *Quamquam, sicut paulo ante dixi, tantummodo Scripturis canonicis hanc ingenuam debeam servitutem, qua eas solas ita sequar, ut conscriptores earum nihil in eis omnino errasse, nihil fallaciter posuisse non dubitem. Ibid.* 3, 24; col. 286. Cf. Nat. et Grat. 61, 71; P. L. 44, 282.

[52] Ep. 180, 5; P. L. 33, 779. Cf. Jerome, Bk. 1, *Against Pelagius*; Cyprian, Ep. 70 to Quintus.

3. *The truth of Scripture quotations.*

Although the Scriptures are true, still St. Augustine recognizes that a distinction must be made with regard to quotations found in Scripture. The Scriptures are true in ascribing certain statements or quotations to those who uttered them, but there is not always truth in the statements themselves. This is what is known today as the distinction of the *veritas citationis,* historical truth, and the *veritas rei citatae,* objective truth of what is stated. The recognition and use of this distinction, but without the same terminology, by St. Augustine, centuries ago, appears in the following passage.

Just as in the case of the Gospel, although it is altogether true that those things written there were said, still not everything which was said is to be believed as true, for the Gospel which is a truthful writing bears witness to the fact that many false and impious statements were made by the Jews, so too in the case of this book [Job] in which it is narrated that many persons have spoken, it is necessary to consider not only what was said, but also by whom it was said. For if we receive indiscriminately whatever is said in any book of Scripture we shall be forced,—which God forbid,—to accept as true and just the suggestion made by that foolish woman [Job's wife] to her saintly husband, namely, that he speak something against God in order to free himself from his intolerable pain (Job. 2, 9). I have said this, not because I believe that these friends of Job, reprobated as they were by the Lord, and justly rebuked by that same holy servant of God, could not have said anything true, but for the reason that not everything that they said is to be regarded as true.[53]

Divine authority guarantees, therefore, that the statements attributed to certain individuals in Scripture were really made by them, but it does not in each case guarantee that these statements are true. Their truth is to be known in some other way. St. Augus-

[53] *Sicut autem in Evangelio, quamvis verum sit omnino quod dicta sint, non tamen omnia quae dicta sunt vera esse credantur: quoniam multa a Judaeis falsa et impia dicta esse verax Evangelii Scriptura testatur: sic in hoc libro, ubi multae personae locutae esse narrantur, non solum quid dicatur, sed a quo etiam dicatur considerandum est. . . . Quod non ideo dixerim, quia illi amici a Domino reprobati, et ab ipso sancto Dei servo merito culpati, nihil veri loqui potuerunt: sed quia non omnia quae locuti sunt, vera putanda sunt.* Oros. 9, 12; P. L. 42, 676; cf. 1 Cor. 3, 19.

tine recognizes the character of the individuals who speak as a subsidiary principle which may aid in determining the truth or falsity of what is said, but he does not place too much insistence on its value, since even the wicked can utter some things which are true. And he is about to say that even worthy individuals can utter things which are not to be accepted as true. Thus the man born blind is recorded in the Gospel as having said: "God does not hear sinners" (John 9, 31), but his statement is not to be accepted as true, or as one supported by divine authority, says St. Augustine, for we know from Christ's own words to the Publican that God does hear sinners.[54] The more important principle is to consider what was said, and to try and find out whether it be true or false. If the quoted statement be in conflict with a statement of Christ, it cannot be true, or if it be opposed to some declaration made by the authors of Scripture themselves, whether in the Old or New Testament, it is thereby to be judged as false. "But in consequence of the special eminence of the canonical writings, we are bound to receive as true whatever the Canon shows to have been said by even one Prophet, or Apostle or Evangelist." [55]

4. *In recording sinful deeds Scripture does not approve of them.*

Just as the Scriptures faithfully record those statements of men which are not true, and therefore not to be accepted, so too it describes with equal fidelity the sinful actions of men, not that we may imitate them, but that we may avoid them.[56] The truth of Scripture is made more evident in that it records not only the good actions of men, but their evil deeds as well. In recording sinful actions, say St. Augustine, no stain is brought on the character of God, or on the truth of Scripture. On the contrary, because it relates them we are forced to approve and admire the Scripture in its resemblance to a faithful mirror, which reflects not only the beauties and perfections, but also the faults and deformities of

[54] *Ibid.* col. 676-677.

[55] *In illa vero canonica eminentia sacrarum Litterarum, etiamsi unus propheta, seu apostolus, aut evangelista aliquid in suis Litteris posuisse ipsa canonis confirmatione declaratur, non licet dubitare quod verum sit.* C. Faust. 11, 5; P. L. 42, 249.

[56] *Ibid.* 22, 45; P. L. 42, 427.

those who approach it.[57] Likewise he says, that it is no disparagement to light that in revealing all things it discloses what is unsightly. Neither is the sanctity of Scripture affected by the evil deeds which it records.[58]

In defending the Scriptures against the Manicheans as a faithful narrative of evil deeds as well as good actions, St. Augustine says that the mistake of the Manicheans consists in thinking that the Scriptures related these evil actions for our approval. On the contrary Scripture itself teaches us to condemn them. In Scripture all fornication and adultery are condemned by the divine law. Consequently, when actions of this kind are narrated, without being expressly condemned, it is intended, not that we should praise them, but that we should pass judgment on them ourselves. Thus Herod's cruelty is narrated without being condemned, but everyone instinctively knows that it merits condemnation and not imitation.[59] It sometimes happens that men who have committed evil actions are praised in Scripture, but they are praised not for their evil deeds, but for their good ones. Thus Lot is praised not for incest and drunkenness, but for his holy life and hospitality in wicked Sodom.[60]

Scripture itself, continues St. Augustine, either passes sentence upon human actions related in it as worthy of approval or disapproval, or it leaves the reader to do so." [61] It also sets before us men who are blameworthy or praiseworthy. It even points out to us that in some cases the blameworthy deserve praise, and the praiseworthy blame. For, as he once more repeats, the sacred record is a mirror of truth.[62]

All attacks, therefore, says St. Augustine, made on the truth and sanctity of Scripture injure none but the one who makes them. For in assailing the Scripture, he assails a book which is deservedly an object of universal reverence and possesses an eminent authority, which is harmed neither by the carping criticisms of the Manich-

[57] C. Faust. 22, 60; P. L. 42, 438.
[58] *Ibid.* 22, 61; col. 438.
[59] *Ibid.* 22, 62; col. 439.
[60] *Ibid.* 22, 60; col. 437 sq.; *ibid.* 22, 45, 427; C. Gaudent. 1, 31, 38-39; P. L. 43, 730; Quaest. Hept. 7, Q. 49; P. L. 34, 813-815.
[61] C. Faust. 22, 65; P. L. 42, 440.
[62] *Ibid.*

eans, nor by the enmity of the whole Gentile world. It is a book which "has conquered the world, not by violence and warfare, but by the resistless force of truth." [63]

§ III. History in the Bible

1. *Absolute truth of the historical statements in general.*

Benedict XV,[64] in condemning the false views of modern criticism, rejected the principle of relative truth in historical matters, as one entirely inconsistent with the nature and law of history, which is to relate facts as they really occurred. This is to say that historical statements cannot be relatively true, but must be absolutely true. St. Augustine, centuries before, had pointed out this same law of history to friend and foe alike, and had vindicated the absolute truth of Scriptural history on the grounds that it actually described what had taken place. In *De Genesi ad Litteram,* he says of the statement of Gen. 2, 8: *God had planted a paradise of pleasure . . . wherein he placed man whom He had formed;* "it is so written, because it so happened." [65] Elsewhere he finds that the same law of history has been observed by the sacred writers. "We read of these things in the Books of Kings. These things were done, and just as they were done so they have been written." [66] And again: "It is most true, because it took place, and what took place has been written." [67]

Back of this observance of the law of history is the action and influence of divine inspiration, under which, as St. Augustine has already noted, the sacred author cannot assert what is false. In other words, divine inspiration guarantees the truthfulness of the statements of the sacred historians.

Whatever, [says St. Augustine], Holy Scripture, placed as it is on

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[63] C. Faust. 22, 60; P. L. 42, 438; cf. C. Mend. 14, 29; P. L. 40, 539; Ep. 138, 4, 19; P. L. 33, 534; C Faust 22, 83; P. L. 42, 454.

[64] *Sp. Paraclitus.* A. A. S., vol. XII, 395.

[65] *Sic enim scriptum est, quia sic factum est.* Gen. ad Litt. 8, 3, 6; P. L. 34, 374; cf. *ibid.* 8, 4, 8; col. 375.

[66] *Facta sunt ista et quemadmodum facta sunt, ita ibi conscripta sunt.* En. in Ps. 59, 1; P. L. 36, 714.

[67] *Verissimum est, quia contigit, et quod contigit scriptum est.* En. in Ps. 33, 2; P. L. 36, 300.

the highest summit of authority by reason of its well founded proofs of truth, asserts of Enoch, Elias and Moses, that we believe.[68] . . . The reason of our believing Him [Christ] to have been born of the Virgin Mary . . . is that it is so written in the Scriptures, which we must believe in order to be Christians and to be saved.[69]

Because the historical books of Scripture were composed under divine inspiration and possess divine authority, secular histories are to be considered false, if they contradict the historical statements of Scripture. "We, being sustained by divine authority in the history of our religion, have no doubt that whatever is opposed to it is most false." [70] And the truth of its history which is known *a priori* is also confirmed by the truth of its prophecies. "Scripture which relates nothing untrue, finds confirmation of the truth of its historical statements from the fact that its prophecies have been accomplished." [71]

2. *Historical character and truth of Genesis.*

From the earliest centuries of the Christian era the first three chapters of Genesis have been the subject of much discussion. Long before the time of St. Augustine, Philo and Origen, upheld the view that these chapters were allegorical, rather than historical, in character.[72] And this opinion of theirs was also shared by some of St. Augustine's contemporaries. Because the events recorded in the Paradise narrative are outside the usual course of nature, the latter were content to have the real historical narrative begin after the

[68] *Quidquid de Enoch et de Elia et de Moyse Scriptura sancta, certis et magnis suae fidei documentis in summo culmine auctoritatis locata testatur, hoc credimus.* C. Faust. 26, 3; P. L. 42, 480.

[69] *Ideo credimus natum ex virgine Maria . . . quia sic scriptum est in ea scriptura, cui nisi crediderimus, nec christiani nec salvi esse poterimus. Ibid.* 26, 7; col. 483.

[70] *Nos vero in nostrae religionis historia, fulti auctoritate divina, quidquid ei resistit, non dubitamus esse falsissimum.* Civ. Dei 18, 40; P. L. 41, 600. Cf. n. 41, and Divers. Quaest. LXXXIII, Q. 36, 1; P. L. 40, 25.

[71] *Nullo modo Scriptura ista mentitur, quae narratis praeteritis facit fidem, eo quod ejus praedicta complentur.* Civ. Dei 16, 9; P. L. 41, 487.

[72] Civ. Dei 13, 21; P. L. 41, 394 nota; cf. Gigot, F., *Gen. Introd.* 419, 433; Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 146.

expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.[73] St. Augustine's treatise *De Genesi ad Litteram,* written in refutation of such views, remains as a monument to his belief, and that of the Church of his time, whose able spokesman he was, in the historical character and truth of the Book of Genesis.

It is not to be thought, however, that he regarded every expression in these chapters as literally true, for he was fully aware of the anthropomorphisms there.[74] With regard to the narrative of creation, it must be noted, that he accepted the revealed dogma of the creation, but did not regard as a literal description of the act of creation, the sacred author's distribution of it over six successive "days". For him the "six days" of Creation do not describe a real succession of time, but are simply the sacred author's mode of grouping and portraying what had been created by God in a moment of time.[75]

> Augustine, [says M. J. McKeough], held firmly to the theory of the creation of all things. The act of creation did not extend over a period of time, but occurred in a mathematical moment. At that moment all things came into existence: some in their proper forms, others only potentially. . . . Augustine does not tell us in what order things appeared; but he does imply that they passed from their *rationes seminales* directly to their own proper forms.[76]

In his treatise *De Genesi ad Litteram,* St. Augustine does not get beyond the first three chapters of Genesis, but it is clear that he regards the entire book as historical.[77] A perusal of Books 15 and 16 of *De Civitate Dei* confirms this. Indeed it is quite instructive to observe how he defends the truth of the statement of Genesis 4, 17, that Cain built a city and named it for his son Enoch. Apparently Cain is represented as doing a very incredible thing,

[73] Gen. ad Litt. 8, 1, 2; P. L. 34, 372-373; cf. Schümacher, H., *Hist. Value of Genesis, Chap. II,* H. P. R., vol. 23 (1923), 919.

[74] Gen. ad Litt. 4, 8, 15; P. L. 34, 301-302.

[75] Dorlodot, *Darwinism and Cath. Thought,* 52; 81; 141. Cf. Gen. ad Litt. lib. 4; Civ. Dei, lib. 11-13; Gen. c. Man; Gen. ad Litt. Imperf.

[76] *The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales in St. Augustine,* 94. Cf. Gannon, P. J., *Evolution and Cath. Doctrine,* Studies, 17 (1928), 275; Dorlodot, *op. cit.* 81-82.

[77] Gen. ad Litt. 8, 1, 2; P. L. 34, 372.

namely, building a city at a time when only four men were alive upon earth. To this objection, St. Augustine replies:

> that the writer of the sacred history does not necessarily mention all the men who might be alive at that time, but those only whom the scope of his work required him to name. The design of that writer, who in this matter was the instrument of the Holy Ghost, was to descend to Abraham through the successions of ascertained generations propagated from one man, and then to pass from Abraham's seed to the people of God.[78]

Having established this principle, St. Augustine then proceeds to show why it is reasonable to believe that many men were alive when Cain built the city.

> But even though Enoch was the first born of the city's founder [Cain], that is no reason for supposing that the father named the city after him as soon as he was born; for at that time, he, being but a solitary man, could not have founded a civic community, which is nothing else than a multitude of men bound together by some associating tie. But when his family increased to such numbers that he had quite a population, then it became possible for him both to build a city, and give it when founded, the name of his son. For so long was the life of the antediluvians, that he who lived the shortest time of those whose years are mentioned in Scripture attained to the age of 753 years. And though no one attained the age of a thousand years, several exceeded the age of nine hundred. Who then can doubt that during the lifetime of one man the human race might be so multiplied that there would be a population to build and occupy not one but several cities? And this might very readily be conjectured from the fact that from one man, Abraham, in not much more than four hundred years, the numbers of the Hebrew race so increased, that in the exodus of that people from Egypt there are recorded to have been six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms, and this over and above the Idumeans, . . . and over and above the other nations which were of the same stock of Abraham.[79]

St. Augustine found no reason to question the historical truth of the antediluvian genealogies in Genesis, and his failure to do

[78] Civ. Dei 15, 8, 1; P. L. 41, 446.
[79] *Ibid.* 15, 8, 2; P. L. 34, 447.

so, has been attributed to his lack of skill as a historical critic.[80] Such is not the case. If he regarded them as true, it was because he could not reconcile error in the historical statements of the sacred writer with the Catholic principle of inspiration.

3. *The literal and typical sense of Scripture.*

It is another principle of St. Augustine, applicable not only to Genesis, but also to the other books of Scripture, that the things recorded in them are often significant of something else. In other words that there is in them a double sense, literal and spiritual, or as we are accustomed to call it, typical. This typical or spiritual sense is defined by St. Augustine as "the figurative signification of historical realities."[81]

St. Augustine's belief in this double sense is clearly expressed in his writings. "The writer of those Sacred Scriptures, or rather the Spirit of God by him, selects those things by which not only past events are narrated, but also future happenings are foretold."[82] Elsewhere he expresses the same thing;—"All that happened is not written, but only those things are related which the Holy Ghost . . . judged sufficient, not only to describe what took place, but also to prefigure the future."[83] Again he says: "These things both happened in the earthly Jerusalem, as the history shows, and were types of the heavenly Jerusalem."[84]

He acknowledges as the correct method of exegesis that which first recognizes the literal truth of the historical books of the Old Testament, and then builds upon it typical or allegorical meanings.

[80] Lagrange, M. J., *Recensions,* R. B. vol. 15 (1909), 155.

[81] *Rerum figurata significatio gestarum.* Gen. ad Litt. 8, 4, 8; P. L. 34, 375. Cf. Schumacher, H., *Hist. Value of Gen.,* Chap. II, H. P. R. 23 (1923), 919; Douais, C., *St. Augustin et la Bible,* R. B. 1894, 128-130; Synave, P., *La Doctrine de St. Thomas d'Aquin sur le sens litteral des Écritures,* R. B. vol. 35 (1926), 42.

[82] Civ. Dei 16, 2, 3; P. L. 41, 479.

[83] Gen. ad Litt. 5, 8, 23; P. L. 34, 329; En. in Ps. 104, 14; P. L. 37, 1398; De Mend. 5, 5; P. L. 40, 491.

[84] *Haec enim et in terrena Jerusalem secundum historiam contigerunt, et coelestis Jerusalem figurae fuerunt.* Civ. Dei 17, 3, 2; P. L. 41, 526; cf. *ibid.* 15, 8, 1; col. 445-446.

Before all things, brethren, we admonish you in God's name, to the best of our power, that in hearing the narrative of the events recorded in Holy Scripture, you first of all believe that those events took place in the way which Scripture tells them, lest taking away the reality of the thing described, you seek to build as it were on air (*ne subtracto fundamento rei gestae, quasi in aere quaeratis aedificare*). . . . Whatever the Scripture records of Abraham is at once a fact and a prophecy.[85]

When but recently converted from his Manichean errors, St. Augustine had, in his *De Genesi contra Manichaeos,* turned upon his former deceivers, and attempted to refute their attacks upon Genesis. But in doing so, he had explained, as he recalls in *De Genesi ad Litteram,*[86] some of the passages in an allegorical manner only. He did this not because he then rejected their literal truth,[87] but because he was at that time unable to defend their literal truth, although he desired to do so.[88] Indeed, at that very time, he considered him to be the ablest and most praiseworthy commentator, who could explain and defend these passages literally as well as allegorically.[89] Later when he wrote *De Genesi ad Litteram* he was better instructed and more accomplished in the interpretation of Scripture, and he was then able to defend the literal truth of Genesis,[90] though he has no objection to an additional allegorical interpretation.

Some, [he says], allegorize all that concerns Paradise itself, where

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[85] *Quidquid Scriptura dicit de Abraham, et factum est, et prophetia est.* Sermo II, 6, 7; P. L. 38, 30-31. Cf. Civ. Dei 17, 3, 2; P. L. 41, 526.

[86] 8, 2, 5; P. L. 34, 374.

[87] *Hic ergo totus sermo primo secundum historiam discutiendus est, deinde secundum prophetiam. Secundum historiam facta narrantur, secundum prophetiam futura praenuntiantur.* Gen. c. Man. 2, 2, 3; P. L. 34, 197; Retract. 1, 18; P. L. 32, 613.

[88] *Memor tamen quid maxime voluerim nec potuerim, ut non figurate sed proprie primitus cuncta intelligerentur.* Gen. ad Litt. 8, 2, 5; P. L. 34, 374.

[89] *Sane quisquis voluerit omnia quae dicta sunt, secundum litteram accipere, id est, non aliter intelligere quam littera sonat, et poterit evitare blasphemias, et omnia congruentia fidei catholicae praedicare, non solum ei non est invidendum, sed praecipuus multumque laudabilis intellector habendus est.* Gen. c. Man. 2, 2, 3; P. L. 34, 197.

[90] Gen. ad Litt. 8, 2, 5; P. L. 34, 373; *ibid.* 8, 7, 13; col. 378.

the first men, the parents of the human race are, according to the truth of Holy Scripture, recorded to have been: and they understand all its trees and fruit-bearing plants as virtues and habits of life, as if they had no existence in the external world, but were only so spoken of or related for the sake of spiritual meanings. . . . No one then denies that Paradise may signify the life of the blessed; its four rivers, the four virtues. . . . its trees all useful knowledge etc. . . . These and similar allegorical interpretations may be suitably put upon the Paradise without offense to anyone, while yet we believe the truth of the history, commended as it is by its most faithful narration of the facts (*dum tamen et illius historiae veritas fidelissima rerum gestarum narratione commendata credatur*).[91]

St. Augustine, as well as the other Fathers, held that much of what is related in the Old Testament is a type of the New Testament. Whether St. Augustine and the other Fathers have in each case given the correct spiritual meaning, the one intended by God, does not concern us here. It is only desired to show that St. Augustine taught the existence of the typical as well as the literal sense of Scripture. It may perhaps be said in passing, that many of the so called allegorical interpretations that have been given to the Old Testament, are to be regarded as human inventions. They are meanings put into the facts, events, persons and things of the Old Testament by men, and are, therefore, not real meanings of Scripture, since the real meanings are those only intended by God. These man-made spiritual senses may, however, be called allegorical senses of Scripture, inasmuch as they are made on the principle that the passage is significant of something else.

It is not to be denied that St. Augustine had a fondness for the typical sense of Scripture, especially in his sermons.[92] If some interpretations are fanciful, much is sober and done with excellent judgment. It is incorrect, however, to assert that St. Augustine believed that everything in the Old Testament had an allegorical meaning, or that he sought to give everything an allegorical meaning. He states his position very definitely in *De Civitate Dei:*

[91] Civ. Dei 13, 21; P. L. 41, 394-395. Cf. Gen. ad Litt. 8, *caps.* I to V; P. L. 34, 371 sq.

[92] Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 490.

What we read of historically as predicted and fulfilled in the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, we must also inquire the allegorical meaning of, as it is to be fulfilled in the seed of Abraham according to the faith. And so much is this so, that some have thought that there is nothing in these books either foretold and effected, or effected although not foretold, that does not insinuate something else by figurative signification to the city of God on high, and to her children who are pilgrims in this life, . . . But, just as I think they err greatly who are of opinion that none of the accounts of affairs in that kind of writings mean anything more than that they so happened, so I think those very daring who contend that everything in them has an allegorical meaning.[93]

Again:

Not all the facts indeed which are narrated [94] are to be considered as typical of something; but even those which have no typical signification are interwoven for the sake of things which are typical. . . . It is only the ploughshare which breaks up the soil, but to effect this, other parts of the plough are necessary. It is only the strings of harps . . . which produce melodious sounds, but that they may do so, there are other parts of the instrument. . . . So in this prophetic history some things are narrated which have no typical signification, but are as it were, the framework to which the things which have a typical signification are attached.[95]

4. *Literary forms in Scripture.*

Within the historical books themselves are to be found certain literary forms, viz., the fable of Joatham in Judges 9, 7-15, and the many parables of our Lord in the Gospels. These literary forms, however, are creations not of the sacred writers themselves,

[93] *Mihi autem sicut multum videntur erare, qui nullas res gestas in eo genere litterarum aliquid aliud praeter id quod eo modo gestae sunt significare arbitrantur; ita multum audere, qui prorsus ibi omnia significationibus allegoricis involuta esse contendunt.* Civ. Dei 17, 3, 2; P. L. 41, 526.

[94] He is speaking of Genesis.

[95] Civ. Dei 16, 2, 3; P. L. 41, 479. Cf. *ibid.* 15, 26, 1; P. L. 41, 472; *ibid.* 15, 27; col. 473; C. Faust. 4, 2; P. L. 42, 219; *ibid.* 12, cap. 37-43; col. 273 sq.; *ibid.* 22, cap. 94-96; col. 463 sq.; Cat. Rud. 9, 13; P. L. 40, 320; *ibid.* 26, 50; col. 345; Ep. 148, 4, 13; P. L. 33, 628; Sermo 89, 4; P. L. 38, 556.

but of those whose words and deeds the sacred writers are engaged in recording.

It was the Lord, not the Evangelist who related this parable, [Prodigal Son], for the Evangelist related that the Lord related it. Hence what the Evangelist related, namely, that the Lord spoke this discourse, was also done. But what the Lord Himself related was a parable, and in a parable it is never required that the things related be shown to have literally taken place.[96]

The sacred writer then is merely acting the rôle of the truthful historian in recording that these forms of discourse were used by the individuals to whom they are attributed. Had the sacred writer himself, however, chosen to employ such literary forms, he could have done so consistently with inspiration, for, as St. Augustine teaches, these fictitious narratives have a truth of their own. His remarks, therefore, on the truth of fables and parables are important, because a type of literature similar to them, namely, allegory, is found to have been used by the authors of Scripture.

He insists that the truth of a fable or parable is not to be sought in the narration itself, but in what the narration signifies. He points out that Horace and Aesop employed the fable to teach certain truths in a more striking way, and observes that no one is so unlearned as to accuse the authors of writing what is false.[97] Our Lord employed the parables for a similar reason. Both the fable and the parable are fictitious narratives, but they are not false, because they have some further signification.[98] "When our fiction bears some signification, it is not a lie, but is a figure of the truth. Otherwise everything figuratively said by wise and holy men, or even by the Lord Himself, is to be reckoned as a lie. Thus the parable of the Prodigal Son would have to be considered

[96] *Non enim hoc Evangelista, sed Dominus ipse narravit: Evangelista vero hoc Dominus narrasse narravit. Proinde quod narravit Evangelista, etiam factum est; Dominum scilicet talia locutum fuisse: ipsius autem Domini narratio parabola fuit, de qua numquam exigitur ut etiam ad litteram facta monstrentur, quae sermone proferuntur.* Gen. ad Litt. 8, 4, 8; P. L. 34, 375-376. Cf. Quaest. Hept. 2, Q. 93; P. L. 34, 630.

[97] C. Mend. 13, 28; P. L. 40, 538.

[98] Sermo 89, 6; P. L. 38, 558; cf. Sermo 73, 2; col. 471.

as a lie, but it is not," because "a fiction which has reference to some truth is a figure, one which has no reference to truth is a lie." [99] For similar reasons metaphors and figures of speech found in Scripture are not to be considered as falsehoods, as they are true in the sense intended by the sacred writer.[100]

Akin to the parable is the literary form known as allegory. Such a literary type St. Augustine teaches is found in the Canticle of Canticles. He characterizes it, not as a "*narratio rerum gestarum*", narrative of historical events, but as a "*narratio figurata-rum rerum*", a narrative of figurative things, whose truth lies not in the narration itself, but in what the narration is intended by its author to signify. "The literary form of these books [Genesis] is not one which consists in a narrative of figurative things, as is the case in the Canticle of Canticles, but is entirely a narrative of historical realities, as is the case in the Books of Kings and others of that type." [101] The allegory, therefore, resembles the parable, which is a "*narratio figurarum*," [102] and a similitude of the truth.[103] And like the parable it differs from the typical sense, which is the "*rerum figurata significatio gestarum.*" [104]

Allegory and allegorical interpretation are not to be confused. There is a vast difference between the literary form of allegory, and what is called the allegorical sense or interpretation of Scripture. In allegory it is not the intention of the writer to narrate facts which have taken place,—the narrative is not of historical realities. The words or narration itself are a type or figure of something else. On the other hand, allegorical interpretation is based on the literal, historical truth of what is narrated in Scripture, and presupposes it. The facts, persons, or things contained in the narration were realities, but in the Providence of God, were

[99] Quaest. Evang. 2, Q. 51; P. L. 35, 1362.

[100] C. Mend. 10, 24; P. L. 40, 533. Cf. Quaest. Hept. 2, Q. 93; P. L. 34, 630.

[101] *Narratio quippe in his libris non genere locutionis figuratarum rerum est, sicut in Cantico Canticorum, sed omnino gestarum, sicut in Regnorum libris et hujuscemodi.* Gen. ad Litt. 8, 1, 2; P. L. 34, 372.

[102] *Ibid.* 8, 4, 8; col. 375.

[103] Sermo 73, 2, 2; P. L. 38, 470.

[104] Gen. ad Litt. 8, 4, 8; P. L. 34, 375.

intended to have a further significance, that is, to be types and figures of something else. St. Augustine makes this distinction quite evident in his defense of the history of Jonah and the Whale.

> It is neither unreasonable nor unprofitable to inquire what these miracles may signify, so that, after their significance has been explained, man may believe, not only that they really occurred, but also that they have been recorded, because of their possessing some further signification. Let him, therefore, who proposes to inquire why the prophet Jonah was three days in the capacious belly of a sea monster, begin by dismissing doubts as to the fact itself; for this did actually happen, and it did not happen in vain. For if figures which are expressed in words only [parables and allegory], and not in actions, aid our faith, how much more should our faith be helped by figures expressed not only in words but also in actions. (*Si enim movent ad fidem quae figurate tantum dicta, non facta sunt; quanto magis movere debent quae figurate non tantum dicta, sed facta sunt.*) [105]

To say that the words of a book have only an allegorical meaning or interpretation, is to deny the existence of the literal truth of its words, and thereby make it an allegory, and not history. This is why St. Augustine insists so strongly at all times that the literal meaning of the historical and prophetical books is to be first asserted and upheld, and that once this has been done, one may strive to discover from it, and build upon it, allegorical meanings.

It is no doubt in view of the fact that the Canticle of Canticles is a narrative whose character is allegory, and not history, that St. Augustine enunciates in *De Genesi ad Litteram* [106] the principle, that in books of Scripture which contain narratives of things done (*in narratione ergo rerum factarum*), we should inquire whether everything is to be considered allegory alone, or whether the historical truth is also to be asserted and defended.[107]

[105] Ep. 102, 33; P. L. 33, 383; cf. Civ. Dei 15, 27, 1; P. L. 41, 473. After showing from Christ's own words that Jonah's episode was intended to prefigure Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day, Augustine, with very good taste, gives allegorical explanations to the rest of the Book of Jonah.

[106] 1, 1, 1-2; P. L. 34, 247.

[107] *Ibid.* 1, 1, 1; *Quaeritur utrum omnia secundum figurarum tantummodo intellectum accipiantur, an etiam secundum fidem rerum gestarum*

The Canticle of Canticles, however, is the only book of this type which St. Augustine recognizes in Scripture. Unlike modern criticism, he believes that the books of Job, Tobias, Esther, Judith, and Daniel contain real history. He places them in the same category as the historical books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Josue, Judges, Kings, Ruth, Paralipomena, Esdras, and Machabees. Daniel he groups among the prophets.[108]

He is aware of the poetical character of the Psalms, and even speaks of their meter in a letter to Memor:

> I have not stated in this treatise [*De Musica*] the kinds of meter in which the lines of David's Psalms are composed, because I do not know them. For it was not possible for anyone, in translating these from the Hebrew (of which language I know nothing), to preserve the meter at the same time, lest by the exigencies of the measure he should be compelled to depart from accurate translation further than was consistent with the meaning of the sentences. Nevertheless, I believe on the testimony of those who are acquainted with that language, that they are composed in certain varieties of meter; for that holy man loved sacred music, and has more than any other kindled in me a passion for its study.[109]

The statements of the Psalmist, whether historical or predictive, are true. However, inasmuch as he is a poet, he enjoys privileges in handling historical themes, not enjoyed by a historian. "For Psalmody is not bound by the law which governs the narrator and writer of history."[110] But apart from this remark, St. Augustine does not engage in any discussion of poetry as a literary type.

asserenda et defendenda sint. Cf. Zycha, *Corp. Script. Eccles. Lat.*, vol. 28, *loc. cit.*

[108] Doct. Christ. 2, 8, 12; P. L. 34, 40.

[109] Ep. 101, 4; P. L. 33, 369.

[110] *Quae plagae cum sint decem, nec omnes commemoratae sunt, nec eodem ordine quo ibi factae leguntur. Libera enim est laudatio a lege narrantis et texentis historiam. Cujus laudationis auctor et dictor cum sit per prophetam Spiritus sanctus; eadem utique auctoritate qua per eum egit hominem, qui illam scripsit historiam (Exodus), et commemorat aliquid factum quod ibi non legitur, et quod ibi legitur praeterit.* En. in Ps. 104, 27; P. L. 37, 1400.

§ IV. The Bible and Science

The problem of reconciling the statements of Scripture with the findings of science did not arise for the first time in the modern world. It was one which engaged the attention of St. Augustine, and which drew from him the formulation of important principles to be applied in its solution. St. Augustine had not a spirit of hostility towards science, but rather one of sympathy. "He was not particularly interested in science, but he respected it, and throughout his works he shows that he was well acquainted with the scientific theories of his day." [111] If he had any quarrel with scientists, it was with those who attempted to prove that the facts of science contradict the statements of Scripture, or with those, whose pretended facts,—conclusions whose truth had not been demonstrated,—were urged as objections to the truth of Scripture.

St. Augustine realized full well that there can never be any real contradiction or opposition between the facts of science, and the statements of Scripture, because human truth cannot be opposed to divine truth.

> If reason, however acute it may be, is found contradicting the authority of the divine Scriptures, it deceives by a semblance of truth, for in that case it cannot be true. On the other hand, if against the most manifest and reliable testimony of reason, anything be set up claiming to have the authority of the Holy Scriptures, he who does this, does it through misapprehension of what he has read, and is setting up against the truth, not the real meaning of Scripture, which he has failed to discover, but an opinion of his own. He alleges, not what he has found in the Scriptures, but what he has found in himself as their interpreter.[112]

All conflict and misunderstanding between the scientist and the scripturist could be avoided, if each would confine himself to his own sphere, and be careful also, as St. Augustine says, "not to make rash assertions, or to assert what is not known, as known." [113]

[111] McKeough, M. J., *The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales in St. Aug.*, p. 12; cf. Conf. 5, 5; P. L. 32, 709; Ep. 55, c. 1-5; P. L. 33, 204 sq.; Civ. Dei 3, 15; P. L. 41, 91-92; *ibid.* 16, 9; col. 487; *ibid.* 5, 6; col. 146.

[112] Ep. 143, 7; P. L. 33, 588.

[113] *Tantum ne aliquid temere atque incognitum pro cognito asserat.* Gen. ad Litt. Imperf. 9, 30; P. L. 34, 233.

But since the misunderstanding has arisen, St. Augustine teaches that it is the duty of the Scripture scholar and defender of Catholic truth, either to show that the facts of science can be reconciled with the teaching of Scripture; or to demonstrate that those views of science which are put forth as contradicting the Scriptures, are in reality false views. Should the Catholic apologist be unable to demonstrate their falsity, then he as well as every true Christian must believe them to be false, and the Scriptures to be true.

> Whatever, [says St. Augustine], they [the men of physical science] can readily demonstrate to be true of physical nature, we must show to be capable of reconciliation with our Scriptures; and whatever they assert in their treatises to be contrary to these Scriptures of ours, that is, to Catholic faith, we must either prove it as well as we can to be entirely false, or at all events, we must without the smallest hesitation believe it to be so.[114]

Nor is it unreasonable for St. Augustine to demand such a profession of belief in the truth of Scripture, since he has already made it clear that the inerrancy of Scripture is the necessary consequence of its inspiration, and that divine truth cannot conflict with human truth. There can be only an apparent conflict. Therefore as a matter of prudence he urges all not to be hasty in accepting, as certain, views propounded on obscure matters.

> Observing at all times moderation befitting serious piety, it is our duty not to accept hastily any belief in obscure matters, lest perhaps, when the truth is later brought to light,—although it can in no way be opposed to the statements of the Sacred Scriptures, whether of the Old or New Testament,—we nevertheless refuse to accept it, out of love for our own erroneous opinion.[115]

St. Augustine did not leave to others the task of proving that there is no conflict between the statements of Scripture and the

[114] *Ut quidquid ipsi de natura rerum veracibus documentis demonstrare potuerint, ostendamus nostris Litteris non esse contrarium. Quidquid autem de quibuslibet suis voluminibus his nostris Litteris, id est, catholicae fidei contrarium protulerint, aut aliqua etiam facultate ostendamus, aut nulla dubitatione credamus esse falsissimum.* Gen. ad Litt. 1, 21, 41; P. L. 34, 262; Leo XIII, Encyl. *Prov. Deus.*

[115] Gen. ad Litt. 2, 18, 38; P. L. 34, 280.

facts of science. He assumed it himself, and demonstrated conclusively by two most important principles, that all charge of error against the sacred authors in scientific matters is without foundation, and is consequently to be dismissed. These principles are: first, that the sacred authors did not intend to teach science, and therefore had no intention of describing physical phenomena in the exact terms of science; second, that the sacred authors merely intended to describe physical phenomena as they appear to the senses. Actually the ordinary expressions in use among men describe physical phenomena as they appear to the senses, v. g., the sun rises and sets. Consequently Scripture which speaks to men with human words and forms of expression, has adopted them.[116]

St. Augustine's effort to interpret the statements of Scripture concerning the heavens, and to bring them into harmony with the scientific views of his time, called forth from him in *De Genesi ad Litteram* the expression of both of these principles. The first occurs at the conclusion to the following passage:

> Frequently one hears the question asked, "according to our Scriptures, what must we believe the form and figure of the heavens to be?" For many have written long disputations on these matters, but our authors [the writers of Scripture] have with greater prudence omitted these discussions, realizing that they have no profit for the leading of a holy life. . . . For myself it matters little, whether the sky as spherical in form completely encloses the earth, suspended as it is in the midst of the universe, or whether it only partially covers it as a vault from above. But inasmuch as this question bears on the truth of Scripture, I will discuss it. For lest anyone, not rightly understanding the words of Scripture, (since in matters of this kind one may either have found or heard that there is in our Scriptures something which seems to be opposed to the conclusions of reason), should entirely refuse to believe them when they set forth useful instructions, narrations or declarations on other matters, I feel in duty bound to say that our authors knew the truth of the matter concerning the form of the heavens, but the Spirit of God, who spoke by them, did not intend to teach men these things in no way profitable for salvation. (*Breviter dicendum est de figura*

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[116] C. Adim. 7, 4; P. L. 42, 138; Trin. 1, 12, 23; P. L. 42, 837. Cf. St. Chrysostom; *Omnia enim secundum humanam consuetudinem loquitur [Scriptura]*. In cap. 7, Genes. Homil. 25, 3; P. G. 29, 222.

coeli hoc scisse auctores nostros quod veritas habet: sed Spiritum Dei, qui per ipsos loquebatur, noluisse ista docere homines nulli saluti profutura.) [117]

This principle,—that the sacred writers, or rather the Holy Ghost did not wish to teach these things in no way profitable to salvation, —minus St. Augustine's too generous allowance of scientific knowledge to the writers of Scripture beyond that of their time, was emphasized by Leo XIII in his Encyclical, *Providentissimus Deus,* as fundamental for harmonizing the text of Holy Scripture with the data of the natural sciences.

The second principle is closely correlated to the first. For, having declared that it was not the intention of the sacred authors to make scientific pronouncements on the form of the heavens, St. Augustine then proceeds to say that it was their intention to speak of them as they appear to the eyes of men. For if the heavens are described as having the shape of a vault or of an inverted bowl, " it is rightly believed," says St. Augustine, " that Scripture wishes to speak of the form of the heavens according to that part which is over us." [118]

The principle that the sacred authors describe physical phenomena as they appear to the senses is likewise invoked by St. Augustine to show that the views of scientists on the relative size of the heavenly bodies do not conflict with the statement of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 15, 41: *One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory.*

If the scientists are right in saying that many stars are equal to the sun in size and brilliance, and even larger than it,—these stars seeming to be smaller only because of their vastly greater remoteness from the earth than the sun,—then, says St. Augustine, Paul is found to have described the sun, moon, and stars, only as they appear to the eyes of men on earth. The heavenly bodies differ in glory, but only to the

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[117] Gen. ad Litt. 2, 9, 20; P. L. 34, 270.

[118] *Bene quippe creditur secundum eam partem, quae super nos est, de coeli figura Scripturam loqui voluisse.* Gen. ad Litt. 2, 9, 22; P. L. 34, 271. Cf. *ibid.* 2, 10, 23; col. 272.

eyes of men on earth. . . . Star also differeth from star in glory, and some of them are even greater than the sun.[119]

Personally St. Augustine inclined to the opinion that the sun and moon not only appear to men's eyes to be larger than the other heavenly bodies, but also that they are actually greater in magnitude.[120] If he is to be excused for taking this position rather than that of the scientists, because of his imperfect knowledge of astronomy, on the other hand he must be admired for his sympathetic and liberal spirit towards the views of science, and for his readiness to demonstrate that scientific truth is not opposed to the teaching of Scripture.

Elsewhere he explains to a friend that the moon does not increase or decrease, but appears to do so. "This at least is plain, . . . that the moon does not to our eyes increase except when it is receding from the sun, nor decrease except when returning towards the sun."[121] And likewise in *De Genesi ad Litteram* he states that the moon, which appears to increase is always full, but does not always appear so to the inhabitants of the earth.[122] Consequently if he had been called upon to defend the truth of those expressions in Scripture which represent the moon as increasing or decreasing, as full or crescent, he would have done so on the grounds that the sacred authors spoke of the moon, not as it is, but as it appears to the eyes of men on earth. It is quite evident, too, that the tenets of the heliocentric system would have created no embarrassment for St. Augustine. The apparent difficulties which arose later with the acceptance of these teachings were already solved by his principle, that the writers of Scripture speak of physical phenomena as they appear to the senses.

Not content with setting forth the principles by which scientific truth is shown not to be in conflict with biblical truth, St. Au-

[119] *Differunt quidem in gloria, sed ad oculos terrenorum. . . . Differunt quidem in seipsis sidera in gloria, sed tamen nonnulla sunt etiam sole majora.* Gen. ad Litt. 2, 16, 33; P. L. 34, 277.

[120] Ep. 14, 2; P. L. 33, 79.

[121] Ep. 55, 4, 7; P. L. 33, 208.

[122] [*Luna*] *crescere videtur; semper est plena, sed terrae habitatoribus non semper apparet. Op. cit.* 2, 15, 31; P. L. 34, 276.

gustine feels it his duty to give wholesome advice for the prevention of further misconceptions and differences in this matter.

It frequently happens, [he says], that a man who is not a Christian knows and maintains from well founded reasons and experience, views concerning the earth, the heavens, the other elements of the universe, the motion and variation and even the magnitude and intervals of the stars, the regular eclipses of the sun and the moon, the succession of years and seasons, the natures of animals, fruits, stones and the like. Hence this is by all means to be avoided as a thing exceedingly shameful and of direst consequence, namely, that a Christian should allow any unbeliever to hear him prating foolishly about these matters, giving all the while the impression that what he says is according to the teachings of the Christian Scriptures, when as a matter of fact what he says concerning these matters of science is entirely wrong, and the unbeliever knowing it can scarce refrain from scornful laughter. One does not feel vexation so much that the erring Christian is ridiculed, as that the impression is given to unbelievers that our authors hold such erroneous views, and that they, for whose salvation we so strenuously labor, censure and reject them as ignorant, to their own great ruin. For if, in any matter of which they have perfect knowledge, they discover a Christian entertaining erroneous views, and at the same time defending his false opinions from our Scripture, how, I ask, will it be possible for them to believe those Scriptures when they speak of the resurrection of the dead, and of the hope of eternal life . . . when it is their conviction that these Scriptures are in error in those matters of which they already have actual knowledge, or which they have been able to learn from calculations which are entirely reliable.[123]

Such Christians, he is compelled to say, are a source of sorrow and annoyance to their more prudent brethren, because they prevent men of science from entering the Church,[124] which is for the scientist as well as for the unlearned.

[123] Gen. ad Litt. 1, 19, 39; P. L. 34, 261.
[124] *Ibid.*

PART II

CANONICITY

CHAPTER III

St. Augustine's Canon of Scripture

In his work *De Doctrina Christiana,* written with a view to aid the reader and interpreter of Sacred Scripture, St. Augustine has given an enumeration of the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. He presents his list as follows:

The whole Canon of the Scriptures . . . is contained in the following books:[1] Five books of Moses, i. e., Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Josue, the son of Nun; one of Judges, one short book called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of Kings; next, four books of Kings, and two of Paralipomenon,—these last not following one another, but running parallel, so to speak, and going over the same ground. The books just mentioned are history, which contains a connected narrative of the times and follows the order of the events. There are other books which seem to follow no regular order, and are connected neither with the order of the preceding books, nor with one another, such as Job, and Tobias, and Esther and Judith, and the two Books of Machabees, and the two of Esdras, which last books look more like a sequel to the continuous regular history which terminates with the books of Kings and Paralipomenon. Next are the Prophets, in which there is one book of the Psalms of David[2]; and three books of Solomon, viz., Proverbs, Canticle of Canticles, and Ecclesiastes. For two books, one called Wisdom and the other Ecclesiasticus, are ascribed to Solomon from a certain resemblance of style, but the most likely opinion is that they were written by Jesus the son of Sirach. Still they are to be reckoned among the prophetical books, since they have attained recognition as being authoritative.[3] The remainder are the books which are strictly called the Prophets; twelve separate books of the Prophets

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[1] *Totus autem canon Scripturarum . . . his libris continetur. Op. cit.* 2, 8, 13; P. L. 34, 41.

[2] In his *Enarrationes in Psalmos,* St. Augustine adopts the view that the titles of the Psalms are inspired. Cf. *op. cit.* Ps. 64, 1; P. L. 36, 772; Ps. 59, 1; col. 714; Ps. 33, 1-2; col. 300-301.

[3] *Qui tamen quoniam in auctoritatem recipi meruerunt, inter propheticos numerandi sunt. Ibid.*

which are connected with one another, and having never been disjoined are reckoned as one book; the names of these Prophets are as follows;—Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggaeus, Zacharias, Malachias; then there are the four greater Prophets Isaias, Jeremias, Daniel, Ezechiel. The authority of the Old Testament is contained within the limits of these forty-four books. That of the New Testament is contained within the following: Four books of the Gospel, according to Matthew, according to Mark, according to Luke, according to John; fourteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul, one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, one to the Colossians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; and one of James; one book of the Acts of the Apostles; and one of the Apocalypse of John.[4]

In this Canon of the divine Scriptures, the names of all the deutero-canonical books of the Old Testament appear, except that of Baruch. The book of Baruch is omitted in name only, for it was customary in the time of St. Augustine, as he himself informs us, to reckon it as part of Jeremias. "Some attribute this testimony [Baruch], not to Jeremias, but to his secretary, who was called Baruch. But it is more commonly ascribed to Jeremias." [5]

Although two books of Esdras are listed in St. Augustine's Canon of the Scriptures, three books in reality are designated, namely, I Esdras, now III Esdras; and II Esdras, now two separate books, known as I and II Esdras, or Esdras and Nehemias. That St. Augustine reckoned III Esdras as one of the canonical books is evident from the fact that he quotes chapter 3, verse 9 and the following of it as canonical.[6] The third book of Esdras, however, is really not an independent writing, but a translation of our canonical books of Esdras, Nehemias, and Paralipomenon, with one lengthy interpolation, viz., iii-v, 6, taken from some other source.[7] It is therefore "a version of certain parts of Holy Scripture, whose

[4] Doct. Christ. 2, 8, 13; P. L. 34, 41.

[5] Civ. Dei 18, 33, 1; P. L. 41, 592; *ibid.* 15, 23; col. 471. It was also customary in the second and third century to quote Baruch as Jeremias. Cf. *Ante Nicene Christian Library*, vol. 14, 69.

[6] Civ. Dei 18, 36; P. L. 41, 596.

[7] Gigot, F., *Gen. Introd.* 122-123.

substance is inspired, but whose individuality may be rejected by the Church, as was done in the case of the old Septuagint translation of Daniel." [8]

In enumerating the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus as canonical, St. Augustine expressed the opinion that Jesus Sirach was most likely the author of both of them. But elsewhere [9] he asserts that Jesus Sirach is the author of Ecclesiasticus alone, and that it cannot be proved that he is the author of Wisdom. On the contrary, it is more probable that he is not the author of it, although it is impossible for him to say who is the real author.

At the end of the list of books of the Old Testament St. Augustine makes this remark: "The authority of the Old Testament is contained within the limits of these forty-four books." [10] In his *Retractations* [11] he explains that he here used the term "Old Testament" in accordance with ecclesiastical usage. In another place he tells us that in ecclesiastical usage the term "Old Testament" signified all the canonical Scriptures written before the advent of Christ.[12] It is interesting to note also that the expression "Law and Prophets" as used in Augustine's time was meant to designate the same books as the term "Old Testament." "However, as I have already remarked, we are accustomed, in our ordinary use of words, to designate by the name of Old Testament, all the Scriptures of the Law and Prophets which were given previous to our Lord's incarnation, and are contained in the authority of the Canon." [13]

[8] *Ibid.* 123.

[9] Retract. 2, 4, 2; P. L. 32, 631; Spec. Scrip. Sac. P. L. 34, 946.

[10] *Loc. cit.*

[11] 2, 4, 2; P. L. 32, 631.

[12] *Judicatum est . . . secundum hanc loquendi consuetudinem, qua universae Scripturae canonicae ante incarnationem Domini ministratae Veteris Testamenti appellatione censentur.* Gest. Pelag. 5, 15; P. L. 44, 329. Cf. *Hoc loco Vetus Testamentum intelligentes (episcopi) . . . Scripturas omnes canonicas ante adventum Domini ministratas. Ibid.* 35, 62; col. 356.

[13] Gest. Pelag. 5, 13; P. L. 44, 327-328. Cf. C. Pelag. 3, 4, 12; P. L. 44, 595; *dicitur jam obtinente loquendi consuetudine Vetus Testamentum, Lex et Prophetae omnes, qui usque ad Joannem prophetaverunt;* cf. also, In Joan. Evang. T. 9, 5; P. L. 35, 1460; Trin. 15, 17, 30; P. L. 42, 1081; Spec. Scrip. Sac. P. L. 34, 887; Doct. Christ. 3, 30, 43; P. L. 34, 82; Unit. Eccl. 19, 51; P. L. 43, 430; Tertullian, *De Praescript. Adv. Haer.*

The Canon of the divine Scriptures given in *De Doctrina Christiana* by St. Augustine corresponds to that drawn up by the Fathers of the Councils of Hippo, in 393, and of Carthage, in 397, and 419.[14] St. Augustine himself was a member of these last two Councils, and his name is found among those of the forty-four bishops who signed the decrees of the Council of Carthage in 397. This Council in its 47th Canon enacted anew what the Council of Hippo had decreed in its 38th Canon. It was decreed that " besides the canonical Scriptures, nothing shall be read in the Church under the name of the divine Scriptures." The Council then enumerates the canonical books by name. The deutero-canonical books find a place in the lists of each of these Councils. In legislating that no scriptures except canonical Scriptures shall be read in the Church under the name of divine Scriptures, the Councils did not forbid other books to be read in church. It simply prohibited them from being read under the title of divine Scripture. The reading of the Acts of the Martyrs on their anniversaries was expressly permitted. Moreover it is not unusual to find St. Augustine himself reading in church from the writings of Cyprian, and from ecclesiastical records, particularly in his many controversies.[15]

In the Councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397) the Fathers of the Councils deemed it advisable to consult " the Church across the sea ", that is, the Roman Church, on the action it had taken with regard to the canonical books.[16] Likewise after promulgating this same Canon of the Scriptures for the third time in the Council of Carthage (419), the Fathers decreed that this Canon should be submitted to Pope Boniface, or to the Bishops in the other parts of the Church for confirmation.[17] We have no records to prove that Pope Boniface ratified this Canon. A

c. 36. The expression Law and Prophets, however, is capable of having a narrower sense, and is sometimes so used by St. Augustine. Cf. C. Gaudent. 1, 31, 38; P. L. 43, 729.

[14] Mansi, vol. 3, 891 sq.

[15] Gest. Pelag. 11, 25; P. L. 44, 335; Ep. 23, 3; P. L. 33, 95.

[16] *De confirmando isto canone transmarina ecclesia consuletur.* Mansi, vol. 3, 891.

[17] *Hoc etiam fratri et consacerdoti nostro Bonifacio, vel aliis earum partium episcopis pro confirmando isto canone innotescat, quia a patribus ista accepimus in ecclesia legenda.* Mansi, vol. 3, 891; cf. vol. 4, 430.

predecessor of his, however, Innocent I, accepted as canonical all the books enumerated by the African Church as such. For when asked by St. Exsuperius of Toulouse, in Gaul, for a list of the canonical books, it was this list as drawn up in the African Church which he sent in answer to his request.[18]

What is most important in this action of the Bishops of the Council of Carthage (419), is their statement that the books enumerated by them as canonical "are those which they have received from the Fathers to be read in the Church."[19] They therefore officially testify that they are following an established tradition in receiving these Scriptures.[20] Indeed it is not to be thought that they would make such an important pronouncement without first ascertaining whether the books listed by them as divine and canonical, were, in reality, the ones handed down as such by the Fathers. St. Augustine himself, the light and guiding spirit of the African Church, informs us that it was only after diligent examination that the apocryphal books of the Old and New Testament were excluded from the Canon,[21] and that the Scriptures which were retained in the Canon were those which had come down in a well known and unbroken succession from the Fathers.[22] If a reason is sought for the threefold promulgation of the Canon of Scripture by the African Church within less than thirty years, it is to be found in the opposition raised against the deutero-canonical books during the same period by St. Jerome.[23]

This testimony of the Fathers of the African Church takes on added weight if one recalls that they were excellently qualified to speak as witnesses of an official tradition. From the time of

[18] P. L. 20, 501-502.

[19] Mansi, *loc. cit.*

[20] Cf. Howorth, H. H., *Influence of St. Jerome on the Bible Canon*, J. T. S., vol. 11 (1909-10), 321; also *ibid.* 10 (1908-09), 496; Newman, J. H., *Development of Christian Doctrine*, 125.

[21] *Quae omnia nomine apocryphorum ab auctoritate canonica diligenti examinatione remota sunt.* Civ. Dei 15, 23, 4; P. L. 41, 471.

[22] *A quibus (patribus) usque ad nos auctoritas veracium Scripturarum certissima et notissima successione pervenit. Ibid.* col. 470. Cf. C. Faust. 13, 5; P. L. 42, 284. This point will receive fuller treatment under St. Augustine's Criterion of Canonicity.

[23] Gigot, F., *op. cit.* 60. Cf. Howorth, H., *op. cit.* vol. 11, 321.

Agrippinus of Carthage (220 A. D.), regular Church councils of a general nature were held almost annually, except in times of persecution. In fact general synods were more frequent in Africa from the time of St. Cyprian than anywhere else in Christendom.[24] A well informed tradition was thus enabled to flow down through an official and regular channel. Records of these councils were kept which have since perished. And the Fathers of the African Church not only had access to such records, but they also had in their possession works of the Fathers before them which have since disappeared. They were, therefore, well situated to know what books the Fathers who preceded them in the faith received as divine Scripture. It is indeed providential that we are linked up with the early tradition of the Church by the official statements of these reliable witnesses.

[24] Havey, F. P., *African Synods*, C. E., vol. 1, 200; cf. Hefele, C., *Hist. of the Councils*, vol. 1, 86-87; vol. 2, 397.

CHAPTER IV

St. Augustine's Concept of a Canonical Book

It is not possible to determine accurately the precise time at which the practice of designating the Scriptures as "canonical" first began. The term is found for the first time in the 59th Canon of the Council of Laodicea, held in 360 or 363.[1] Consequently, less than ten years after the birth of St. Augustine (Nov. 13, 354),[2] the practice of referring to the Sacred Scriptures as the canonical Scriptures was already in existence in the Church. That the adjective "canonical" was commonly employed in the African Church as a technical term to designate the Sacred Scriptures during the lifetime of St. Augustine is apparent from the frequent occurrence of it in his writings.[3] To Jerome, he writes: "It is to those books of Scripture alone, which are now called canonical that I have learned to pay this honor and esteem."[4] And to his pagan readers of *De Civitate Dei,* he explains that Christians accept the testimony of Old and New Testament writings, which are called by them canonical Scriptures. The City of God "believes also the Holy Scriptures, Old and New, which we call canonical."[5]

We are greatly indebted to St. Augustine for explaining the sense in which he used the term canonical with reference to the Scriptures. In the course of a sermon delivered on the feast of St. Stephen, the Proto-Martyr, he observes that the facts of Stephen's martyrdom have the distinction of being recorded in a canonical book. He then pauses to explain that the Acts of the Apostles is a canonical book, because it belongs to the Canon of the Scriptures. "His [Stephen's] martyrdom is related in a canonical book.

[1] *Quod non oportet privatos et vulgares aliquos psalmos dici, nec libros non canonicos, sed solos canonicos veteris et novi testamenti.* Mansi, 2, 574; H. Höpfl, *Canonicité,* D. B. Suppl., vol. 1, 1026.

[2] Hatzfeld, Ad., *St. Augustine,* 10.

[3] It occurs with reference to the Scriptures more than 200 times.

[4] Ep. 82, 1, 3; P. L. 33, 277.

[5] Civ. Dei 19, 18; P. L. 41, 646; *ibid.* 11, 3; col. 318; Ep. 147, 5; P. L. 33, 598; Ep. 237, 2 sq.; col. 1035; Doct. Christ. 2, 8, 12; P. L. 34, 40; C. Cresc. 1, 33, 39; P. L. 43, 466.

The Acts of the Apostles is a book which belongs to the Canon of the Scriptures." [6] St. Augustine, therefore, calls a book canonical because it is one which is in the Canon, or belongs to, the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures. Accordingly whenever the term canonical occurs in his works as a designation of the Scriptures, it is in this sense that it is to be understood, unless the context suggests a different meaning.[7]

In view of the fact that St. Augustine defines a canonical book as one which is in or belongs to the Canon of Scripture,[8] it is also necessary to determine the sense in which the expression " Canon of Scripture " is used by him. As stated in the preceding chapter, St. Augustine, in giving the list of the canonical books, prefaced his enumeration with the statement: *Totus autem canon Scripturarum . . . his libris continetur.*[9] Here the term " Canon of the Scriptures " has the meaning of official list, catalog, or collection of the inspired Scriptures, and this is the characteristic meaning of the expression whenever it is found in his writings. It is in

[6] *Hujus passio in canonico libro est. Actus Apostolorum liber est de Canone Scripturarum.* Sermo 315, 1, 1; P. L. 38, 1426.

[7] Augustine sometimes uses canonical with the meaning of authentic. *Ex apostoli Pauli canonicis, id est, vere Pauli Epistolis utrumque profertur.* C. Faust. 11, 6; P. L. 42, 249. This meaning results from the fact that it is only the authentic writings of the Apostles which are in the canon. Cf. Ep. 237, 2; P. L. 33, 1035. Sometimes it is used synonymously with divine or holy. " Canonical Scripture speaks in this fashion . . . these words of the divine book " etc. Civ. Dei 15, 23, 2; P. L. 41, 469; cf. Ep. 202 bis. 4, 10; P. L. 33, 933; Ep. 147, 5, 12; col. 601; C. Pelag. 4, 10, 28; P. L. 44, 630. Civ. Dei 18, 53, 1; P. L. 41, 617; Nupt. et Concup. 2, 29, 51; P. L. 44, 466; Oros. 9, 12; P. L. 42, 676. Civ. Dei 1, 20; col. 34; cf. also T. L. L. 3, 276. At other times synonymously with ecclesiastical and catholic. " Not from any writings, but from the ecclesiastical, canonical, and Catholic writings. . . . These are the writings which the Church receives and retains." C. Faust. 23, 9; P. L. 42, 471; cf. *ibid.* 33, 6; col. 514; Nat. Bon. 24; P. L. 42, 558; C. Fel. 12; P. L. 42, 526; also T. L. L. 3, 276.

[8] Augustine's definition of a canonical book as one belonging to the Canon has an important bearing on his position respecting the deutero-canonical books. All the deutero-canonical books are enumerated by him as belonging to the Canon. Consequently his true attitude towards these books is that they are canonical.

[9] Doct. Christ. 2, 8, 13; P. L. 34, 41.

this sense of list, catalog, or collection, that the term occurs in the following passages: "The four Gospels hold the first place in the Canon of the New Testament;"[10] "Those things . . . you may see by reading them in the Acts and writings of the Apostles, which complete the Canon of the divine Scriptures;"[11] "Some feared to receive it [Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews] into the Canon of the Scriptures."[12]

Sometimes, however, St. Augustine lays particular stress on the fact; 1) that this list, catalog, or collection of sacred books is one which has been officially fixed or determined; 2) that this list, or collection of books is one by which the truth of all other books may be judged. It will be useful, therefore, to group his statements concerning the Canon of the Scriptures under this twofold division.

1. *The Canon of the Scriptures is a definite and fixed list of divine Scriptures.*

In the year 400 A. D. the expression, "Canon of the Scriptures," designated a well defined list of books in the African Church, and this situation was so well known, that St. Augustine had no hesitancy in asking his bitter opponents, the Donatists, this question; "Who does not know that the holy, canonical Scripture, both of the Old as well as the New Testament, is contained within its definite limits?"[13] In *De Civitate Dei,* he states that it is not without good reason that the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures is one which is fixed and limited.[14] Likewise in the same work, he says

[10] *Caput in canone Testamenti Novi . . . quatuor Evangelia tenuerunt.* Spec. Scrip. Sac. P. L. 34, 970. Cf. Civ. Dei 18, 37; P. L. 41, 597.

[11] *Ea . . . in Actibus et Litteris Apostolorum, quae divinarum canonem complent, legendo perspicitis.* Unit. Eccl. 25, 72; P. L. 43, 443. Cf. *ibid.* 17, 44; col. 425.

[12] *Nonnulli eam in canonem Scripturarum recipere timuerunt.* In Rom. 11; P. L. 35, 2095. Cf. Civ. Dei 18, 31, 1; P. L. 41, 587; *ibid.* 18, 38; col. 598; 22, 8, 1; col. 760; Ep. 237, 4 sq.; P. L. 33, 1036; In Ps. 105, 1; P. L. 37, 1405; C. Fel. 2, 6; P. L. 42, 538; C. Faust. 22, 79; P. L. 42, 452.

[13] *Quis autem nesciat sanctam Scripturam canonicam, tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti, certis suis terminis contineri?* Bapt. 2, 3, 4; P. L. 43, 128. Cf. Doct. Christ. 2, 8, 13; P. L. 34, 41.

[14] *Non frustra sacrarum Litterarum figitur et terminatur canon. Op. cit.* 18, 41, 1; P. L. 41, 600. Cf. C. Cresc. 2, 31, 39; P. L. 43, 489.

that it was only fitting for the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures to be defined.[15]

In referring to the Canon of the Scriptures as one which has been fixed and determined, St. Augustine of course, is speaking from the Catholic viewpoint,[16] and in particular from that of the African Church, whose Canon had been formally defined by conciliar action,—an action justified by the fact that the Scriptures enumerated by it as canonical had been for years recognized and used by the Church as divine writings. Indeed, St. Augustine takes the position, as will be said in the next chapter, that a book's title to canonicity is secure by the very fact that the Church has recognized and used it as a divine book from apostolic times.

St. Augustine is aware that the limits of the Canon as defined by the Church differ from those fixed by the Jews of his time, and he frequently alludes to this difference. Thus: Ecclesiasticus is not in the Canon of the Hebrews;[17] the same is true of Wisdom,[18] Judith,[19] and the Books of the Machabees.[20] Because of this difference between the Jewish and Catholic Canon, St. Augustine sometimes is careful to note that certain books of the Old Testament are received into the Canon by both the Jews and the Church. Thus he points out that the Book of Ecclesiastes is *also* numbered by the Jews in the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures. (*Librum qui vocatur Ecclesiastes, et a Judaeis quoque habetur in sacrarum canone Litterarum.*)[21]

[15] *Canon quippe sacrarum Scripturarum, quem definitum esse oportebat.* Civ. Dei 22, 8, 1; P. L. 41, 760.

[16] "All who accept any of the books of our (Catholic) canon" etc. C. Faust. 12, 24; P. L. 42, 267. Cf. C. Fel. 2, 6; P. L. 42, 538; C. Faust. 11, 8; P. L. 42, 254; Serm. Dom. 20, 65; P. L. 34, 1263.

[17] *In eorum* [i. e., *Hebraeorum*] *non est canone.* Dulcit. Q. 6, 5; P. L. 40, 165.

[18] *Non sunt* [*Sapientia et Ecclesiasticus*] *in canone Judaeorum.* Civ. Dei 17, 20, 1; P. L. 41, 555. Cf. Spec. Scrip. Sac. P. L. 34, 946.

[19] *Quem* [*librum Judith*] *sane in canone Scripturarum Judaei non recepisse dicuntur.* Civ. Dei 18, 26; P. L. 41, 583.

[20] *Et hanc quidem Scripturam, quae appellatur Machabaeorum, non habent Judaei . . . sed recepta est ab ecclesia.* C. Gaudent. 1, 31, 38; P. L. 43, 729. Cf. *Machabaeorum libri, quos non Judaei, sed ecclesia pro canonicis habet.* Civ. Dei 18, 36; P. L. 41, 596.

[21] Civ. Dei 20, 3; P. L. 41, 661.

2. *The Canon of the Scriptures is a list or collection of books by which the truth of all other books may be judged.*

It is a fact that St. Augustine considered the Sacred Scriptures, even as did the Fathers of the Church before him, as a rule of faith, truth and conduct.[22] His mind on the matter is very clear in this statement of his work *Contra Cresconium:* "To this [Canon of the Church] belong the genuine writings of the prophets and the apostles, upon whose books we do not at all dare to pass judgment, but in accordance with these books we are free to pass judgment on other writings, whether they be those of believers or unbelievers. . . ."[23] And again a similar thought is expressed in *De Unitate Ecclesiae.* "We must not even accept the views of Catholic Bishops, whenever perchance they fall into error, and teach something contrary to the canonical Scriptures of God.[24]

But while viewing the writings in the Canon as a rule of truth, faith and conduct, it is never his custom to call them "*canon veritatis*", or "*canon fidei*",[25] but instead "*regula veritatis*" and "*regula fidei*".[26] Indeed it is very seldom that he ever uses the noun *canon* in the sense of rule.[27]

[22] H. Höpfl, D. B. Suppl., vol. 1, 1023 sq.

[23] *Ad quem [canonem ecclesiasticum] certi Prophetarum et Apostolorum libri pertineant, quos omnino judicare non audeamus, et secundum quos de caeteris litteris, vel fidelium vel infidelium libere judicemus.* C. Cresc. 2, 31, 39; P. L. 43, 489-490.

[24] *Nec catholicis episcopis consentiendum est, sicubi forte falluntur, ut contra canonicas Dei Scripturas aliquid sentiant. Op. cit.* 11, 28; P. L. 43, 410-411. Cf. C. Faust. 11, 5; P. L. 42, 248-249; Civ. Dei 14, 7, 2; P. L. 41, 410.

[25] In Sermo 294, 18; P. L. 38, 1346, speaking of the baptism of infants, St. Augustine says: "The authority of mother Church observes this custom, the established canon of the truth (*fundatus veritatis canon*) upholds this practice." But here the *canon veritatis* is the Church as the context seems to require.

[26] Doct. Christ. 3, 2, 3; P. L. 34, 66; *ibid.* 2, 9, 14; col. 42; Civ. Dei, 18, 40; P. L. 41, 600; *ibid.* 21, 6, 1; col. 716; Bapt. 2, 1, 2; P. L. 43, 127. St. Augustine does not make the Scriptures the only rule of faith and truth. The authority of the Church is always present to correct us if we deviate from true belief. Bapt. 5, 27; P. L. 43, 196; In Evang. Joan. T. 96, 3; P. L. 35, 1875; C. Faust. 26, 7; P. L. 42, 483; Trin. 4, 6, 10; col. 895; Doct. Christ. 3, 2, 2; P. L. 34, 65.

[27] Cf. Civ. Dei 21, 8, 2; P. L. 41, 721. Here the rules or laws of the

It is still a matter of dispute whether the Scriptures were first called canonical because they constitute a canon or rule of faith and truth, or because they belong to the Canon, that is, to the official collection of the divine Scriptures.[28] Whatever be the truth of the matter, this much is certain, namely, that St. Augustine who assuredly regarded the Scriptures as a canon or rule of faith, calls them canonical for the reason that they belong to the Canon.

astronomers are twice called canons, according to the technical terminology of these scientists. Likewise the movements of the heavenly bodies made in conformity with these canons or laws are twice called canonical, v. g., the canonical course of the heavenly bodies, the canonical eclipses. Cf. *ibid.* 3, 15, 1; P. L. 41, 92.

[28] Höpfl, H., *Canonicité*, D. B. Suppl., vol. 1, 1023 sq.

CHAPTER V

St. Augustine's Criterion of Canonicity

The names and number of the canonical books have already been given. It now remains to say why St. Augustine assigns these books a place in the Canon, or in other words, to give his criterion of canonicity. It may be safely said that the search for St. Augustine's criterion of canonicity would have been more difficult had not he himself led us to it in the course of a controversy over the questions of grace and free will, with some Semi-Pelagian Monks of Gaul. In support of his teaching, St. Augustine, as St. Cyprian before him, had quoted the Book of Wisdom. The Monks objected to his citations from the Book of Wisdom, saying that they lacked authority because they were taken from a book which was not canonical. Thereupon St. Augustine defends the canonical character of the Book of Wisdom on the ground that it had been received and used by the Church as a divine book from apostolic times. These are his words:

The statement of the Book of Wisdom must not be repudiated. It is a book which has justly received the honor of being read in the Church of Christ, from the station of the readers of the Church of Christ, and to be heard by all Christians, from Bishops even to the lowest lay believers, penitents and catechumens with the veneration paid to divine authority. . . . It behooves them [these Monks] to prefer the Book of Wisdom to all commentators, because illustrious commentators, even in the times nearest the Apostles, preferred it to themselves, seeing that when they made use of if for a testimony, they believed that they were making use of nothing but a divine testimony. . . . And the Book of Wisdom, which for such a series of years has justly received the honor of being read in the Church of Christ, must not—not now [through the hands of the Pelagians] submit to injustice, because it withstands those who are mistaken on behalf of men's merits.[1]

[1] *Non debuit repudiari sententia libri Sapientiae, qui meruit in ecclesia Christi de gradu lectorum ecclesiae Christi tam longa annositate recitari, et ab omnibus Christianis, ab episcopis usque ad extremos laicos fideles, poenitentes, catechumenos, cum veneratione divinae auctoritatis audiri . . .*

In this important statement it is evident that the Book of Wisdom is canonical, first of all, because it has been received and read by the Church as a divine book, and secondly, because it has been used as divine by the Church from apostolic times.

1. *The Book of Wisdom is canonical because it has been received and read by the Church as divine.*

St. Augustine calls to the attention of these Monks a fact which they cannot deny, namely, that the Church for years has read the Book of Wisdom to the faithful as a divine book. It has not been read secretly as a divine book, but publicly, and that by the official readers of the Church, in the presence of Bishops, lower clergy, lay faithful, and catechumens. By prescribing this book to be read to the people as a divine book, the Church was thereby declaring her belief in its inspired character, and also professing that she regarded it as a book which belonged to the collection or Canon of the divine Scriptures entrusted to her. St. Augustine, therefore, acknowledges in this passage that the usage of the Church is a principle which operated to determine the limits of the Canon of the Scriptures prior to any formal pronouncement of the Church, such as those of the African Councils, and later that of the Council of Trent.

St. Augustine prefers to appeal to this principle rather than to make the easy reply that at that very time when these Monks were rejecting the Book of Wisdom as not canonical, it had for more than thirty years[2] borne the official designation of canonical by reason of the declarations of the African Councils. Indeed as previously stated, the decrees of the African Councils on the Canon of the Scriptures have as their basis the usage and tradition of the

oportet ut istum librum Sapientiae . . . omnibus tractatoribus anteponant; quoniam sibi eum anteposuerunt etiam temporibus proximi Apostolorum egregii tractatores, qui eum testem adhibentes, nihil se adhibere nisi divinum testimonium crediderunt . . . Nec ideo liber Sapientiae qui tanta numerositate annorum legi meruit in ecclesia Christi . . . pati debet injuriam, quoniam resistit eis qui pro meritis hominum falluntur. Praedest. Sanct. 14, 27-29; P. L. 44, 980-981.

[2] St. Augustine wrote this defense of the book of Wisdom in 428 or 429 (Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 487), and the Councils of Hippo and Carthage had declared it canonical in 393 and 397, respectively.

Church. "These are the books which we have received from the Fathers to be read in the Church." [3] It is likewise on the example of the orthodox Fathers and the use of the books in the Church that the Council of Trent rests its decree on the canonical Scriptures. "The . . . Council of Trent following the example of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with equal feeling of piety and respect all the books of the Old and New Testament, because one and the same God is author of both." And "the Council judges it good to join to this decree a list of the books received by the same Synod. . . . If anyone shall not receive these same books as sacred and canonical with all their parts, as they are read in the Catholic Church and contained in the Latin Vulgate . . . let him be anathema." [4] In this last sentence of the decree the Council of Trent sets forth, as E. Mangenot justly says,[5] the reason why the Scriptures are to be received as sacred and canonical. That reason consists in the conduct of the Church which reads them, and in their presence in the old Latin Vulgate, in which the Roman Church has kept them for so many years.

Reference to this same principle of ecclesiastical usage as one determining the Canon of the Scriptures is also found in Augustine's *Epistolae ad Romanos Inchoata Expositio.* Here the Epistles of St. Paul and of the other Apostles are said to be received by ecclesiastical usage.[6] And in his treatise *Contra Faustum,* he defines the canonical Scriptures as "those which the Church receives and retains." [7]

St. Augustine is at pains to impress upon these Semi-Pelagian Monks that in reading and using the Book of Wisdom as divine, the Church has not inaugurated some new custom. Accordingly, he calls to their minds the fact that it had been used as a divine book by the Fathers nearest the Apostles who had distinguished themselves as commentators of the divine Scriptures.

[3] Mansi, vol. 3, 891; *ibid.* 4, 430.

[4] Concil. Trid. Sess. IV, *De Can. Script.*

[5] D. T. C. article, *Canon,* vol. 2, 1600.

[6] *Apostolorum Epistolae, quas usus ecclesiasticus recipit. Op. cit.* 12; P. L. 35, 2095.

[7] *Ipsae* [i. e. *Scripturae canonicae*] *sunt enim quas recipit et tenet Ecclesia. Op. cit.* 23, 9; P. L. 42, 471.

It is important to observe here, that St. Augustine not only states that these early Fathers regarded the Book of Wisdom as one of the divine Scriptures, but also testifies, and gives proof that they used its authority in support of Catholic teaching. He singles out St. Cyprian as one of the Fathers before him, who had used the Book of Wisdom in support of Catholic doctrine.[8] And an examination of St. Cyprian's writings reveals that he used it frequently in support of Catholic teaching.[9] Perhaps St. Augustine also had St. Irenaeus in mind as one of the Fathers nearest the Apostles, for we find him citing against Julianus, the testimony of Irenaeus as that of a Father living close to the times of the Apostles. "Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, lived at a time not far distant from the Apostles."[10] Had St. Augustine so desired, he could have mentioned by name other early Fathers who had used the Book of Wisdom as a divine testimony in confirmation of their teaching.[11]

A passage from St. Augustine's *In Epistolam Joannis Tractatus*[12] sums up what has already been said, namely, that a book is entitled to a place in the Canon if the Church receives and uses it as a divine book. "This Epistle is canonical; it is read throughout all nations; it has edified the whole world. In it you are told by the Spirit of God, that God is love. Now if you dare, go against God, and refuse to love your brother.[13]" What is this, but an

[8] In *De Dono Perseverantiae*, St. Augustine again says that the early Fathers used the book of Wisdom in support of their teaching. *In libro Sapientiae, cujus auctoritate usi sunt magni et docti viri, qui longe ante nos eloquia divina tractarunt;* 17, 43; P. L. 45, 1019.

[9] The passages cited from Wisdom for this purpose may be found in the Index of *The Writings of St. Cyprian*, vol, 2, *Ante Nicene Christian Library.* Some particular instances are: *Testimonies against the Jews*, Bk. 2, n. 14; *ibid.* bk. 3, nos. 15, 53, 66; *On the Dress of Virgins*, T. 1, 10. *Glory of Martyrdom*, n. 10.

[10] *Irenaeus . . . non longe a temporibus Apostolorum fuit.* C. Jul. 1, 3, 5; P. L. 44, 644.

[11] Cf. Vigouroux, F., D. B. vol. 2, 162-167, for table of citations. Also Cornely, *Cursus. Script. Sac.* vol. 1, p. 69 sq.; Breen, *Introd. to Scrip.* p 270 sq.

[12] T. 7, 5; P. L. 35, 2031.

[13] *Ecce habetis, fratres, Scripturas Dei: canonica est ista Epistola; per omnes gentes recitatur, orbis terrae auctoritate retinetur, orbem terrarum*

enumeration of reasons for which John's Epistle is canonical? It is canonical because: 1) it is divinely inspired; it is the Scripture of God; the Holy Ghost speaks by it; 2) it is read as a divine book throughout the nations to which the Church has extended; 3) it is read because the Church retains it as a divine writing; 4) its reading serves to edify the Christian world, because its inspired statements give wholesome doctrinal and moral instruction.

2. *The Book of Wisdom is canonical, because it has been used as divine by the Church from apostolic times.*

St. Augustine attaches great importance not only to the fact that the Book of Wisdom has been used by the Church as divine, but also to the time that it has been employed by her as divine. In the passage of *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum* [14] under consideration, he states that the Book of Wisdom has been used as a divine book in the Church for a long series of years,[15]—a series of years which extends back to the apostolic Church itself.[16] In calling attention to the fact that the Book of Wisdom has been used as divine in the Church from apostolic times, St. Augustine gives the final reason why it must be considered canonical. His criterion of canonicity is now complete. A book has a right to be in the Canon of the divine Scriptures if the Church from apostolic days has recognized and used it as divine.

This criterion likewise appears in his earlier work *Contra Faustum*, in which he teaches that the authority of the canonical Scriptures has been ratified in the times of the Apostles, and has come down in the Church through the succession of bishops. "There is", says St. Augustine, "a distinct boundary line separating all subsequent writings from the authoritative canonical books of the Old and New Testament. The authority of these books having been established in apostolic times, has come down to us through

ipsa aedificavit. Audis hic ab Spiritu Dei, Deus dilectio est. Jam si audes, fac contra Deum, et noli diligere fratrem tuum. Ibid.

[14] 14, 27-29; P. L. 44, 980-981.

[15] *Liber Sapientiae qui tanta numerositate annorum legi meruit in ecclesia Christi. Loc. cit.*

[16] *Sibi eum [librum Sapientiae] anteposuerunt etiam temporibus proximi Apostolorum egregii tractatores, qui eum testem adhibentes, nihil se adhibere nisi divinum testimonium crediderunt. Ibid.*

the successions of bishops and the extension of the Church, and, from a position of lofty supremacy claims the submission of every faithful and pious mind." [17] Of similar import are these words addressed to Faustus by St. Augustine: "The authority of our books [i. e., the canonical books of the Old and New Testament] . . . supported by a succession of Apostles, bishops and councils, is against you." [18] By these words St. Augustine affirms that there is a well defined and official tradition supporting the authority of the canonical books. It begins with the Apostles, and continues through the bishops who have succeeded them, and through the declarations of Church Councils. This is but another way of saying that the Church of his day accepts the Old and New Testament Scriptures as canonical, because the apostolic Church accepted them into the Canon, and has subsequently transmitted them through an unbroken succession of bishops.[19]

Elsewhere in this same treatise, especially in defending the authority and authenticity of the New Testament writings, St. Augustine stresses the fact that this succession of bishops is one which can be traced without break back to apostolic times and sees. In his final appeal to Faustus and his followers, St. Augustine urges them to accept the authority of the Scriptures received by the Church, seeing that this authority has been preserved to their own day through the ministry of the Apostles, and through a regular succession of bishops in the sees of the Apostles.

> My brief word of counsel to you, . . . is this, that if you acknowledge the supreme authority of the Scriptures, you should recognize that authority, which from the time of Christ himself, through the ministry

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[17] *Distincta est a posteriorum libris excellentia canonicae auctoritatis Veteris et Novi Testamenti, quae Apostolorum confirmata temporibus per successiones episcoporum et propagationes Ecclesiarum, tamquam in sede quadam sublimiter constituta est, cui serviat omnis fidelis et pius intellectus. Op. cit.* 11, 5; P. L. 42, 248-49.

[18] *Nostrorum porro librorum auctoritas . . . per successiones Apostolorum, episcoporum, conciliorumque roborata, vobis adversa est. Op. cit.* 13, 5; P. L. 42, 284.

[19] It is evident that books written after apostolic times cannot have a place in the Canon. They are excluded by the very fact that it is impossible for them to have the approval of the apostolic Church and subsequent transmission from it.

of his Apostles and through a regular succession of bishops in the sees of the Apostles has come down to our own day, safely conserved and made illustrious throughout the whole world.[20]

In *De Consensu Evangelistarum* St. Augustine makes it a special point to say that the Gospels of Mark and Luke were written at a time when they could have received the approval of the apostolic Church as well as that of the Apostles themselves. "Indeed Mark and Luke wrote at a time when they could have received the approval not only of the Church of Christ, but also of the Apostles themselves, who were still alive in the flesh." [21] And in saying this he strongly implies that the apostolic Church, and the Apostles themselves actually gave their approval to these Gospels.[22] Hence the approval of the apostolic Church or of the Apostles is a matter to which St. Augustine attaches great importance.[23]

To say, however, that it was the apostolic Church which passed judgment on the inspiration of the Old and New Testament Scriptures is but an indirect way of asserting that the Apostles themselves determined the limits of the Canon of the Old and New Testament. For inasmuch as they were identical with the apostolic Church itself, being indeed its divinely appointed heads and

[20] *Breviter vos admoneo, . . . ut si auctoritatem scripturarum omnibus praeferendam sequi vultis, eam sequamini, quae ab ipsius praesentiae Christi temporibus per dispensationes Apostolorum, et certas ab eorum sedibus successiones episcoporum usque ad haec tempora toto orbe terrarum custodita, commendata, clarificata pervenit?* C. Faust. 33, 9; P. L. 42, 517-518. Cf. a similar question put to Faustus by St. Augustine: "Why do you not submit to the authority of the Gospel, which is so well founded, so well established, so widely renowned, and which from the times of the Apostles has come down through well known successions [of bishops] to our own days?" *Ibid.* 32, 19; P. L. 42, 509. Cf. also, *Ibid.* 28, 2; col. 485; 11, 2; col. 246; 13, 5; col. 284; 28, 4; col. 486; 32, 16; col. 506; 32, 21; col. 510; 32, 22; col. 510; 33, 6; col. 514; C. Adv. L. 1, 20, 39; P. L. 42, 626; Civ. Dei 18, 38; P. L. 41, 598; En. in Ps. 130, 7; P. L. 37, 1708.

[21] *Op. cit.* 4, 8, 9; P. L. 34, 1222; cf. *ibid.* 1, 1, 2; col. 1043.

[22] Jerome says expressly (*De Viris Illus.*; P. L. 23, 621) that Peter approved Mark's Gospel, and by his authority gave it to the churches to be read.—*Marcus . . . breve scripsit Evangelium. Quod cum Petrus audisset, probavit, et Ecclesiis legendum sua auctoritate edidit.*

[23] Ep. 82, 5, 35; P. L. 33, 291.

leaders, it follows that what the apostolic Church approved had the sanction of their authority.

In a letter to Jerome, St. Augustine expressly states that the divine Scriptures were committed to posterity by the Apostles themselves, and, because of that fact, they now enjoy the high authority which belongs to the writings in the Canon. This, in effect, is the substance of the following words; "The truth of the divine Scriptures . . . was committed to posterity, not by any chance individuals, but by the Apostles themselves, and because of this, it was received into the high authority of the Canon." [24]

It is noteworthy in the case of Rufinus, who had formerly shared St. Jerome's opposition to the deutero-canonical books, that after his break with Jerome, he accepts the full Canon of the Old Testament as enumerated by St. Augustine, and takes St. Augustine's position, that this Canon had been established by the authority of the Apostles. He blames Jerome for accepting the Hebrew tradition, and for not accepting "the books of divine Scripture, which the Apostles entrusted to the churches of Christ." [25]

St. Augustine's teaching concerning the apostolic approval of the Old and New Testament writings is confirmed by the expressions quoted above from *Contra Faustum* to the effect that the authority of the Scriptures has come down in the Church by the ministry of the Apostles,[26] and that it has been established by the succession from the Apostles.[27] The approval of the Scriptures as divine by the Apostles and the subsequent uninterrupted use and transmission of them as such by the Church constitute a complete and adequate criterion of canonicity. St. Augustine presents it as the one which accounts for the presence of every book of the Old and New Testament in the Canon of the divine Scriptures.

[24] *Veritas divinarum Scripturarum, . . . memoriae commendata, non a quibuslibet, sed ab ipsis apostolis, ac per hoc in canonicum culmen recepta.* Ep. 82, 2, 7; P. L. 33, 278.

[25] *Libros, quos . . . Ecclesiis Christi Apostoli tradiderunt. Apol. in S. Hieron.* 2, 32-33; P. L. 21, 611-612. Cf. H. Howorth, *Influence of St. Jerome on the Bible Canon*, J. T. S. vol. 11, 345-347.

[26] [*Auctoritas divinarum Scripturarum*] *per dispensationes Apostolorum . . . pervenit.* C. Faust. 33, 9; P. L. 42, 517-518.

[27] *Per successiones Apostolorum . . . roborata. Ibid.* 13, 5; col. 284.

Augustine, [says H. H. Howorth],[28] took the view that the Church from the beginning had had a separate tradition of its own, and that the Bible of Christ and his disciples was not the Bible as the Jews accepted it, in the first century, but the Bible as it had been accepted when the Septuagint version was made, containing several books not in the current Jewish Bible. With Augustine the real mark of authenticity and canonicity in a book was the fact that it had been accepted by the Church and decided by the Church to be authoritative. He knew of no other Canon than the Canon so determined.

The knowledge of the names and number of these inspired Scriptures did not cease with the Church of apostolic times. It survived, as St. Augustine insists, with every succeeding generation of Bishops from the Apostles. Conscious, therefore, of what books have been entrusted to her as divine, the Church has the right to say what these Scriptures are, for it is her right to keep them, and her duty to guard them. And in preserving the true Scriptures she has excluded the false Scriptures, as writings which were not delivered to her in apostolic days. This, as St. Augustine teaches, has been her course with regard to the apocryphal writings.[29]

The authority of the Church over the Scriptures is not an usurped authority. It has, says St. Augustine, been given to her by God Himself. "This authority [i. e., the Holy Scriptures] God has first of all placed in his Church."[30] And the canonical Scriptures are those which she receives, retains and guards.[31] Her right to say what are the Scriptures is perennial. Consequently in every age the authority of the Church is a constant and proximate criterion of canonicity. In the closing years of the 4th century[32] St. Augustine acknowledges it to be such in his famous dictum; "I

[28] *Op. cit.* 482.

[29] C. Fel. 2, 6; P. L. 42, 538-539; C. Cresc. 2, 31, 39; P. L. 43, 489; Civ. Dei 15, 23, 4; P. L. 41, 470.

[30] En. in Ps. 103, 8; P. L. 37, 1341.

[31] *Ipsae sunt enim quas recipit et tenet ecclesia.* C. Faust. 23, 9; P. L. 42, 471; Util. Cred. 6, 13; P. L. 42, 74.

[32] St. Augustine wrote C. Ep. Man. in 396 or 397. Bardenhewer, *Patrology*, p. 483.

would not believe the Gospel, unless the authority of the Church moved me thereto." [33]

It is precisely because he acknowledges the authority of the Church as a norm of canonicity for the Gospels that he must also recognize it as such for the other books of Scripture. "I am obliged to believe this book [Acts of the Apostles] if I believe the Gospel, because both Scriptures are commended to me in the same way by the authority of the Catholic Church" (*catholica commendat auctoritas*).[34]

St. Augustine does not stand alone among his contemporaries in his appeal to the authority of the Church as a ready criterion of canonicity. Rather his view reflects that of the churchmen of his time, as may be seen from the following profession of faith, drawn up by the Bishops who opposed the condemnation of Pelagius. "We receive the Old and New Testament according to the number of books decreed by the authority of the Catholic Church."[35] And in his *Libellus Fidei,* the Monk Bachiarius makes the same profession of faith in terms which are almost identical.[36]

[33] *Ego vero Evangelio non crederem nisi me catholicae ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas.* C. Ep. Man. 5, 6; P. L. 42, 176. It is also from the Church that St. Cyril of Jerusalem (386) bids each one to learn which are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. See Gigot, F., *Gen. Introd.* p. 51.

[34] *Ibid.* 5, 6; P. L. 42, 177. Cf. *ibid.* 9, 10; col. 180.

[35] *Novum et Vetus Testamentum recipimus in eo librorum numero, quem sanctae Ecclesiae tradit auctoritas.* Migne, P. L. 45, 1733.

[36] P. L. 20, 1033. Cf. Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 511.

CHAPTER VI

St. Augustine's Attitude Towards the Deutero-Canonical Books of the Old Testament

St. Augustine has been charged with inconsistency in his attitude towards the deutero-canonical books of the Old Testament.

> His language on this matter, [the Canon of the O. T.] says G. D. Barry, is indeed varying and uncertain. . . . In a long list of books contained in the Canon, he certainly does include the Old Testament Apocrypha [deutero-canonical books] without drawing any clear distinction between their authority and that of the Hebrew Canon, though it must be admitted that he does differentiate between them in other passages.[1]

And again:

> Augustine is prepared at times to limit the term canonical to those Scriptures which the Jews received.[2]

It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine more closely those passages in St. Augustine's writings which give rise to this charge to see if it really be justified.

Before attempting to do this, however, it will be well to quote, even at the cost of some repetition,[3] those of his statements which make no distinction between the deutero-canonical and the proto-canonical books. Most important in this regard is his enumeration of the canonical Scriptures in *De Doctrina Christiana,*[4] written in 397 A. D.[5] Here all the deutero-canonical books are listed as canonical.[6] Nor is it to be thought that this merely represents an earlier attitude towards the deutero-canonical books. His *De*

[1] *Inspiration and Authority of H. Scripture,* 138.
[2] *Ibid.* 139.
[3] Cf. Chaps. III-V of this study.
[4] *Op. cit.* 2, 8, 13; P. L. 34, 41.
[5] Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 488. Cf. Retract. 2, 4; P. L. 32, 631.
[6] Cf. Sermo 315, 1, 1; P. L. 38, 1426, where a canonical book is defined as one belonging to the Canon of the Scriptures.

Doctrina Christiana is one of the works revised by him in the last years of his life.[7] Consequently if he had ceased to regard the deutero-canonical books as canonical he would have indicated this change of mind in his *Retractations*. As a matter of fact in the closing years of his life he again explicitly honors the deutero-canonical books with the title of canonical Scriptures. He does this in his *Speculum De Scriptura Sacra*.[8] In the preface[9] to this work he states that it is his purpose to gather as in a mirror, all the passages of the *canonical books* of the Old and New Testament which command, forbid, or permit whatever relates to the leading of a pious and virtuous life in New Testament times. And among the books from which he draws citations are Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and Tobias. These, however, are not the only ones among the deutero-canonical books which merit the title canonical. There are others, but, as he says, they did not offer him suitable material.[10] Other examples are not wanting to show that in the years intervening between the composition of *De Doctrina Christiana* and *Speculum De Scriptura Sacra* his attitude towards the deutero-canonical books was the same. A statement concerning one of them, namely, Ecclesiasticus, may be mentioned in passing. Ecclesiasticus, he says, is written by the Holy Ghost, and is consequently equal in authority with Genesis.[11] A similar line of argument could be made for all the deutero-canonical books, since he admits that all of them were divinely inspired.

It must not be forgotten either, that St. Augustine was in complete agreement with the African Church of his time. Conse-

[7] Retract. 2, 4; P. L. 32, 631.

[8] Written about 427 A. D. Cf. Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 491.

[9] *Op. cit.* P. L. 34, 888 sq.

[10] *Non omnes libri canonici veteresque huic operi nostro necessaria dederunt. Ibid.* col. 970. Cf. Weirich, F., *Corp. Script. Eccles. Lat.* vol. 12, 154. St. Augustine frequently refers to the books of the Old Testament as *veteres libri*. Cf. *Neque enim divina Scriptura fallit aut fallitur, quae non solum in veteribus Libris habet hujus rei testimonia, . . . verum etiam in apostolicis Litteris legitur.* Pat. 26, 22; P. L. 40, 623; Civ. Dei 19, 18; P. L. 41, 646; Ep. 111, 5; P. L. 33, 425.

[11] *Utraque Scriptura una est, quia uno Spiritu veritatis inspirante conscripta est.* Gen. ad Litt. 4, 34, 53; P. L. 34, 319. Written between the years 401 and 415. Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 489.

quently he shared the views of the African Bishops, who, as has already been said, decreed in the years 393, 397, and 419, that the deutero-canonical books were to be received as canonical Scriptures.

These clear statements of St. Augustine concerning the deutero-canonical books, taken as they are from his earlier and later writings, must be kept in view when considering the more obscure passages in which he seems to discriminate against the deutero-canonical books, and even to deny them a place among the canonical Scriptures. It now remains to examine the passages in question.

1. In his *De Civitate Dei,* St. Augustine makes the statement that "from this time down to the time of Aristobulus, the Jews had not kings but princes; and that the reckoning of their dates is found, not in the Holy Scriptures which are called canonical, but in others, among which are also the Books of the Machabees, which books are held as canonical not by the Jews, but by the Church." [12] The difficulty here is contained in the remark that these dates are not to be found in the Holy Scriptures which are called canonical, but in the Books of the Machabees. The answer to the difficulty, however, is supplied by his own statement that the Books of the Machabees are held to be canonical by the Church and not by the Jews. He means to say, therefore, that the Books of the Machabees are not among the Holy Scriptures which the Jews regard as canonical. They are, however, among the books which the Church regards as canonical. The immediate context demands such an explanation. For if the Books of the Machabees were not held as canonical by the Jews, they would not, therefore, refer to them as canonical. On the other hand they are regarded as canonical by the Church, and hence the Church would call them canonical. At the time when St. Augustine wrote his work *De Civitate Dei* [13] they had in fact already been called canonical for a considerable period of years in the African Church.

[12] *Ab hoc tempore apud Judaeos restituto templo, non reges, sed principes fuerunt usque ad Aristobulum: quorum supputatio temporum, non in Scripturis sanctis, quae canonicae appellantur, sed in aliis invenitur, in quibus sunt et Machabaeorum libri, quos non Judaei, sed ecclesia pro canonicis habet.* Civ. Dei 18, 36; P. L. 41, 596.

[13] 413-426 A. D. Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology* 479.

The general context confirms such an explanation. Up to this point in *De Civitate Dei,* St. Augustine has been tracing from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, for his pagan readers, the history of the Jewish religion, and noting as he proceeded the various prophecies relating to the Christian religion. He takes his material from the proto-canonical and deutero-canonical books alike, but whenever he uses a deutero-canonical book, he explains without fail that it is not in the Canon of the Jews, but is received by the Church.[14] The reason for this is to forestall objection on the part of the pagan readers who might be inclined to say that he is citing prophecy from Christian and not Jewish Scriptures, and hence from a text in which the Christians have inserted the prophecies.[15] Elsewhere in *De Civitate Dei* he says expressly that the opponents of Christianity hesitate to accept the testimony of those Old Testament writings which are not in the Canon of the Jews. "But against those who oppose us, the things which are not written in the Canon of the Jews cannot be quoted with so great validity."[16] Nevertheless he insists on quoting them, because he is convinced that they are a real part of the Old Testament Scriptures.[17]

In the preceding context St. Augustine has already pointed out: 1) that Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus are not in the Canon of the Jews, but are received by the Church, and that the three other books of Solomon, namely, Proverbs, Canticle of Canticles and Ecclesiastes, are held as canonical by both the Jews and Chris-

[14] Even in writing to Christians, he sometimes notes that the d. can. books are not in the Canon of the Jews. Cf. Spec. Scrip. Sac. P. L. 34, 946; Retract. 2, 20; P. L. 32, 638; Dulcit. Q. 6, 5; P. L. 40, 165; Cura Mort. 15, 18; P. L. 40, 606.

[15] Ep. 149, 1, 9; P. L. 33, 634.

[16] *Sed adversus contradictores non tanta firmitate proferuntur, quae scripta non sunt in canone Judaeorum. Op. cit.* 17, 20, 1; P. L. 41, 555; cf. Retract. 2, 20; P. L. 32, 638.

[17] Cf. *Ista* (up to this point he has been quoting the proto-canonical books, and is about to take citations from the deutero-canonical ones) *de libris posuimus, quos et Judaei canonicos habent. . . . Sed non sunt omittendi et hi quos quidem ante Salvatoris adventum constat esse conscriptos, sed eos non receptos a Judaeis, recipit tamen ejusdem Salvatoris Ecclesia.* Spec. Scrip. Sac. P. L. 34, 946.

tians;[18] 2) that Judith is not in the Canon of the Jews;[19] 3) that the prophets already cited are received by both the Jews and Christians as canonical;[20] 4) that other writings of pagan prophets are not received into the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures either by Jews or Christians.[21] Hence in saying that the Books of the Machabees are not among the Holy Scriptures which are called canonical he means to say,—since he admits that the Church calls them canonical, and since, in addition, it is of the Jews and from the Jewish viewpoint that he is speaking,—that they are not among the Holy Scriptures which the Jews call canonical. It is not, therefore, St. Augustine's mind to limit the term canonical to the Scriptures in the Jewish Canon. Rather he extends it to the deutero-canonical books, but in doing so it is customary for him, especially when writing for pagans, to state that these deutero-canonical books are in the Canon of the Church, but not in that of the Jews.

2. In Augustine's work *De Doctrina Christiana* another difficult passage occurs. It is as follows:

Erit igitur divinarum Scripturarum solertissimus indagator, qui primo totas legerit, notasque habuerit, et si nondum intellectu, jam tamen lectione, duntaxat eas quae appellantur canonicae. Nam ceteras securius leget fide veritatis instructus, ne praeoccupent imbecillem animum, et periculosis mendaciis atque phantasmatibus eludentes praejudicent aliquid contra sanam intelligentiam.[22]

Following the accepted punctuation which places a comma before, rather than after *duntaxat,* the passage may be translated in this fashion:

Hence the most skillful interpreter of Scripture will be he, who in the first place has read them all and retained them in his knowledge, if not with full understanding, still with such knowledge as reading gives, at least those of them that are called canonical. For he will read the others with greater safety, when built up in the belief of the truth,

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[18] Civ. Dei 17, 20, 2; P. L. 41, 555; *ibid.* 20, 3; col. 661.
[19] *Ibid.* 18, 26; P. L. 41, 583.
[20] *Ibid.* 18, 26; P. L. 41, 583.
[21] *Ibid.* 18, 47; col. 609.
[22] *Op. cit.* 2, 8, 13; P. L. 34, 40.

so that they (i. e., these others) will not first take possession of a weak mind, nor cheating it with dangerous falsehoods and delusions, fill it with prejudices adverse to sound understanding.[23]

Granting for the moment that this punctuation is correct, and that *duntaxat* here bears the meaning of "at least", it follows that St. Augustine is distinguishing the divine Scriptures into those which are canonical and those which are not canonical, and also that the latter contain errors and falsehood. At the very outset, however, it is necessary to say that the deutero-canonical books are not included by him among the Scriptures which are divine, but not canonical.[24] But from the very fact that this punctuation makes St. Augustine attribute lies and falsehood to divine Scripture it cannot be accepted. It is his clear and repeated teaching that divine Scripture is endowed with truth, that it does not lie or deceive, and that it neither errs nor can err.[25] Hence it is impossible to admit that St. Augustine intended to make such a statement. Indeed the very reason for which he teaches that Scripture is true, is that it is divine and inspired. It is therefore unreasonable to think that he could attribute lies and errors to divine Scripture, even though it be not canonical.

Duntaxat ordinarily has the meaning of "at least", but it is sometimes found used as a synonym of *scilicet, videlicet,* with the meaning of "namely".[26] It occurs also with the meaning of "namely" in later Latin.[27] Used in this sense there is no difficulty, for then St. Augustine is explaining that the divine Scriptures are those which are called canonical.

[23] Schaff, P., *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2, 538.

[24] Nowhere else in his works does St. Augustine refer to any other books as divine outside those enumerated by him in the Canon of Scripture.

[25] It may be well to recall some of his expressions on the inerrancy of Scripture, viz., *Scriptura mendax esse non potest.* Sermo 257, 2; P. L. 38, 1194: *neque enim divina Scriptura fallit aut fallitur.* Pat. 26, 22; P. L. 40, 623: *alia quaestio est, utrum scriptorem sanctarum Scripturarum mentiri oportuerit: imo vero non alia, sed nulla quaestio est.* Ep. 28, 3, 3; P. L. 33, 112: *Nos Veteris Testamenti Scripturas omnes, ut dignum est, veras divinasque laudamus.* C. Faust. 32, 8; P. L. 42, 501. These as well as many others have been referred under the Inerrancy of Scripture.

[26] Cf. Birius, *Thesaurus Ling. Lat.* vol. 2, under *duntaxat.*

[27] DuGange, *Lexicon*, vol. 3, p. 214.

It is not necessary, however, to appeal to this meaning of *duntaxat*. The ordinary meaning of "at least" can be retained if the punctuation be changed. If the comma is placed after *duntaxat* instead of before it, all difficulty vanishes. The Latin text then would be:

Erit igitur divinarum Scripturarum solertissimus indagator, qui primo totas legerit, notasque habuerit, et si nondum intellectu, jam tamen lectione duntaxat, eas quae appellantur canonicae. Nam ceteras securius leget fide veritatis instructus etc.

And the translation would be:

Hence the most skillful interpreter of the divine Scriptures, those which are called canonical, will be he, who in the first place has read them all and retained them in his knowledge, if not yet with full understanding, still now *at least* with such knowledge as reading gives. For he will read the others with greater safety, when built up in the belief of the truth, so that they will not first take possession of a weak mind, nor cheating it with dangerous falsehoods and delusions, fill it with prejudices adverse to sound understanding.

This translation does not do violence to St. Augustine's views of divine Scripture. With a comma placed after *duntaxat,* in the meaning of "at least", *duntaxat* qualifies not the Scriptures which are called canonical, but the knowledge which the reader and interpreter is to have of the divine Scriptures. If he has not as yet a full understanding of the divine Scriptures, let him for the present have at least such knowledge as comes from the reading of the Scriptures. The following context supports this view:

In all these books those who fear God . . . seek the will of God. And in pursuing this search, the first rule to be observed is, as I said, to know these books, if not yet with the understanding, still to read them so as to commit them to memory, or *at least* so as not to remain wholly ignorant of them.[28]

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[28] *In his omnibus libris timentes Deum . . . quaerunt voluntatem Dei. Cujus operis et laboris prima observatio est, ut diximus, nosse istos libros, etsi nondum ad intellectum, legendo tamen vel mandare memoriae, vel omnino incognitos non habere. Ibid.* 9, 14; P. L. 34, 42.

In other words the student of Scripture should have at least that knowledge which comes by reading. If St. Augustine wished *duntaxat* to qualify *eas* he would, in keeping with his usual style, have placed *duntaxat* after *eas* instead of before it, thus: *eas duntaxat quae etc.*[29] . . .

With the comma after *duntaxat* instead of before it, the clause, *eas quae appellantur canonicae,* stands by itself, in apposition to, and explanatory of, *divinarum Scripturarum,* a characteristic clause in St. Augustine, which is used not to make a distinction, but to call attention to the fact that the divine Scriptures are those which are called canonical. Thus;—*divinarum Scripturarum, earum scilicet quae canonicae in ecclesia nominantur.*[30] *Credit etiam Scripturis sanctis et veteribus et novis quas canonicas appellamus.*[31] *Scripturas sanctas, quae appellantur canonicae, legendo* etc.[32] *Scripturam condidit, quae canonica nominatur.*[33] In this frequent explanatory clause can be seen the influence of the repeated decrees of the Councils of Hippo and Carthage, that only the canonical Scriptures are the divine Scriptures. Canonical Scripture means for St. Augustine Holy Scripture, as his language consistently indicates throughout his writings. What he terms Holy Scripture, or divine Scripture, he will immediately refer to as canonical Scripture. And what he calls canonical Scripture he will in the next breath call divine or Holy Scripture. Thus:—*nam etiam hoc exigebant, ut de Scripturis sanctis ostenderemus alicubi dies et consules esse conscriptos: quasi episcoporum concilia Scripturis canonicis aliquando fuerint comparata.*[34] *Canonica Scriptura sic loquitur* . . .

[29] Cf. Trin. 6, 1, 1; P. L. 42, 923. *Nonnulli . . . hoc modo ratiocinati sunt, eos duntaxat qui prius se adversum catholicam fidem extulerunt;* Civ. Dei 12, 19; P. L. 41, 368, *eis duntaxat qui; ibid.* 13, 23; col. 396, *in ea duntaxat vita, quam* etc.; *ibid.* 20, 7, 4; col. 669, *quasi postea seducturus sit eas duntaxat gentes* etc.

[30] Ep. 147, 4; P. L. 33, 598.

[31] Civ. Dei 19, 18; P. L. 41, 646.

[32] Quaest. in Hept. 1, Proem. P. L. 34, 547.

[33] Civ. Dei 11, 3; P. L. 41, 318.

[34] Don. p. Coll. 15, 19; P. L. 43, 663.

haec libri verba divini satis indicant etc.[35] In *litteris sacris . . . de canonicis libris.*[36]

Accepting such a punctuation and translation, St. Augustine's advice to the student of Scripture is in harmony with his views of divine Scripture. The student is first to read the canonical Scriptures, which in fact are the divine Scriptures. Once he has read the canonical Scriptures, it will be safe for him to read all other writings outside of the Canon, for then his mind will have been formed by the truth contained in the canonical Scriptures, and he will be in a position to judge the truth of the statements of all other writings. The sentiment that the canonical Scriptures are a norm by which to judge the truth of other writings, is one that is genuinely St. Augustine's.

3. A third passage which apparently lends countenance to the view that St. Augustine distinguishes two kinds of divine Scripture occurs in a letter to St. Jerome:

Eligat quod voluerit, qui hoc existimat, ubi mentiatur; dum tamen a scribentibus auctoribus sanctarum Scripturarum, et maxime canonicarum, inconcusse credatur, et defendatur omnino abesse mendacium.[37]

Two explanations of the phrase *et maxime canonicarum* are possible. The first is that St. Augustine is addressing St. Jerome from the latter's viewpoint. Augustine knows that Jerome is accustomed to speak more highly of the books which he considers canonical, than of those which he does not call canonical, although admitting that these are received and read by the Church. Consequently Augustine can make an *a fortiori* argument to Jerome about the truth of Paul's statements, seeing that they are in the Scriptures which he calls canonical. Thus: "It should be believed and maintained that all falsehood is absent from the Holy Scriptures, and [what is more from Jerome's viewpoint] especially from the canonical Scriptures."[38] The second explanation is that in the phrase

[35] Civ. Dei 15, 23, 2; P. L. 41, 469.

[36] Spec. Scrip. Sac. P. L. 34, 889; cf. Haer. 70; P. L. 42, 44; Gest. Pelag. 35, 62; P. L. 44, 356; Unit. Eccl. 3, 6; P. L. 43, 395; *ibid.* 22, 62; col. 437.

[37] Ep. 82, 2, 22; P. L. 33, 285.

[38] The whole passage reads: "I leave him who is of this opinion to

et *maxime canonicarum,* St. Augustine uses *maxime* to form the superlative, most canonical, and in this case St. Augustine is reminding Jerome that the authors who wrote "the Holy and most canonical Scriptures" do not state what is false. Such a use of *maxime* is frequent in his writings, as may be seen from some examples, thus: *in sermone ipsius mirabiliter stupendo maximeque diuturno,*[39] " in that marvellously overpowering and pre-eminently copious discourse;" *Praeclara maximeque sublimia,*[40] "so memorable and so pre-eminently sublime;" *Litterae sacrae maximeque veraces,*[41] "Sacred and most truthful Scriptures." There is even a close parallel passage in which it is clearly St. Augustine's intention to use *maxime* to form a superlative of *sanctus* and *canonicus,* viz. *in Scripturis maxime sanctis canonicis.*[42] "In the very holy canonical Scriptures."

4. The fourth and the last passage to be considered occurs also in the same *Letter 82,* written to Jerome. It follows: *Ego enim fateor Charitati tuae, solis eis scripturarum libris, qui jam canonici appellantur, didici hunc timorem honoremque deferre, ut nullum eorum auctorem scribendo aliquid errasse firmissime credam.*[43] If St. Augustine had written, *solis eis scripturarum divinarum libris, qui jam canonici appellantur,* one would have to admit that he is making a distinction between divine books which are canonical, and those which are not canonical. He merely says, however, *solis eis scripturarum libris, qui jam canonici appellantur,* and in this case *scripturarum* can be, and is, a general term, which is qualified by

judge for himself the circumstances in which he is at liberty to utter a lie, provided, however, that it be most firmly believed and maintained that falsehood is altogether absent from the authors who wrote the Holy Scriptures, and especially the canonical Scriptures."

[39] Cons. Evang. 4, 10, 19; P. L. 34, 1226.

[40] *Ibid.* 3, 3, 9; P. L. 34, 1163.

[41] Civ. Dei 11, 6; P. L. 41, 321; cf. *maxime adversum,* Ep. 82, 2, 9; P. L. 33, 279; *maxime fideli,* ibid. 3, 27; col. 287; *maxime sanctis,* Ep. 202 Bis, 6, 13; col. 934; *maxime viles,* C. Petil. 2, 49, 114; P. L. 43, 299; *maxime necessarius,* Locut. in Hept. 1, 32; P. L. 34, 498; Divers. Quaest. 1, 20; P. L. 40, 125.

[42] Grat. Christ. 42, 46; P. L. 44, 381. Cf. *Corp. Script. Eccles. Lat.* vol. 42, 159.

[43] Ep. 82, 1, 3; P. L. 33, 277.

solis eis libris, qui jam canonici appellantur. This use of *scriptura* and *scripturae* as general terms is not uncommon in St. Augustine. Thus;—*omittamus igitur earum scripturarum fabulas, quae apocryphae nuncupantur.*[44] *Huic scripturae a me dictatae et relectae ego Augustinus subscripsi.*[45] *Nam scripturas illas Priscillianistarum esse non dubito.*[46] *Legendo in populis scripturas, quas canon ecclesiasticus non recepit.*[47] *Cui scripturae licet nobis non credere, non est enim in catholico canone.*[48]

In the parallel passage which follows in the same letter St. Augustine avoids all circumlocution, and says directly that he pays this reverence to the canonical books alone.—*Quanquam, sicut paulo ante dixi, tantummodo Scripturis canonicis hanc ingenuam debeam servitutem, qua eas solas ita sequar, ut conscriptores earum nihil in eis omnino errasse, nihil fallaciter posuisse dubitem.*" [49]

The above considerations demonstrate that the obscurer passages of St. Augustine's writings, in which he seems to distinguish the divine Scriptures into those which are canonical, and those which are not canonical, can be brought into harmony with the clearer passages, in which no such distinction is made. They likewise show that his attitude towards the deutero-canonical books is not varying and uncertain, but well defined and entirely consistent. In a word these considerations show that the deutero-canonical books were at all times truly regarded by him as canonical Scriptures.

[44] Civ. Dei 15, 4; P. L. 41, 470.
[45] Ep. 238, 5, 29; P. L. 33, 1049; Ep. 239, 3; col. 1050.
[46] Ep. 237, 1; P. L. 33, 1034; *ibid.* n. 2.
[47] Ep. 64, 3; P. L. 33, 233.
[48] Sermo. Dom. 1, 20, 65; P. L. 34, 1263.
[49] Ep. 82, 3, 24; P. L. 33, 286.

ABBREVIATIONS

I. Augustine's Works

C. Adim.—*Contra Adimantum* (written, c. 394 A. D.).[1]
C. Adv. L.—*Contra Adversarium Legis et Prophetarum* (420).
Bapt.—*De Baptismo Contra Donatistas* (c. 400).
Cat. Rud.—*De Catechizandis Rudibus* (c. 400).
Civ. Dei—*De Civitate Dei* (413-426).
Conf.—*Confessionum Libri* (c. 400).
Conjug. Adult.—*De Conjugiis Adulterinis* (c. 419).
Cons. Evang.—*De Consensu Evangelistarum* (c. 400).
C. Cresc.—*Contra Cresconium* (c. 406).
C. Faust.—*Contra Faustum* (c. 400).
C. Fel.—*Contra Felicem* (c. 404).
C. Gaudent.—*Contra Gaudentium* (420).
C. Jul.—*Contra Julianum* (421).
C. Mend.—*Contra Mendacium* (c. 420).
C. Pelag.—*Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum* (c. 420).
C. Petil.—*Contra Litteras Petiliani* (400-402).
Cur. Mort.—*De Cura Pro Mortuis Gerenda* (c. 421).
De Mend.—*De Mendacio* (c. 395).
Divers. Quaest.—*De Diversis Quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* (c. 397).
Divers. Quaest. LXXXIII.—*De Diversis Quaestionibus LXXXIII* (388).
Doct. Christ.—*De Doctrina Christiana* (397-426).
Don. p. Coll.—*Post Collationem ad Donatistas* (412).
Dulcit.—*De Octo Dulcitii Quaestionibus* (422 or 425).
Enchir.—*Enchiridion de Fide, Spe et Charitate* (c. 421).
En. in Ps.—*Enarrationes in Psalmos* (written at different times).
Ep.—*Epistolae* (written at different times).
Ep. Ad Gal.—*Expositio Epistolae ad Galatas* (c. 394).
Gen. ad Litt.—*De Genesi ad Litteram* (401-415).
Gen. ad Litt. Imperf.—*De Genesi ad Litteram Imperfectus Liber* (c. 393).
Gen. c. Man.—*De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (389-390).
Gest. Pelag.—*De Gestis Pelagii ad Aurelium* (417).
Grat. Christ.—*De Gratia Christi* (418).
Haer.—*De Haeresibus* (c. 428).
In Ep. Joan.—*In Epistolam Joannis Tractatus* (c. 416).
In Evang. Joan.—*In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus* (c. 416).
In Rom.—*Epistolae ad Romanos Inchoata Expositio* (c. 394).

[1] For this date and the following, see Bardenhewer, O., *Patrology*, pp. 477-492.

Locut. in Hept.—*In Heptateuchum Locutionum Libri Septem* (c. 419).
Mor. Eccl.—*De Moribus Ecclesiae et De Moribus Manichaeorum* (388-389).
Musica.—*De Musica* (387).
Nat. Bon.—*De Natura Boni* (after 404).
Oros.—*Ad Orosium* (415).
Nupt. et Concup.—*De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* (419).
Pat.—*De Patientia* (before 418).
Pecc. Mer.—*De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione* (412).
Persev.—*De Dono Perseverantiae* (428 or 429).
Praedest.—*De Praedestinatione Sanctorum* (428 or 429).
Quaest. Evang.—*Quaestionum Evangeliorum Libri* (c. 400).
Quaest. Hept.—*Quaestionum in Heptateuchum Libri* (419).
Retract.—*Retractationum Libri* (c. 427).
Spir. et Litt.—*De Spiritu et Littera* (412).
Sermo.—*Sermones ad Populum* (various times).
Serm. Dom.—*De Sermone Domini in Monte* (c. 393).
Spec. Scrip. Sac.—*Speculum De Scriptura Sacra* (c. 427).
Trin.—*De Trinitate* (410-416).
Unit. Eccl.—*De Unitate Ecclesiae* (c. 402).
Util. Cred.—*De Utilitate Credendi* (391).

II. General

A. A. S.—*Acta Apostolicae Sedis.*
C. E.—*Catholic Encyclopedia.*
D. A. F. C.—*Dictionnaire Apologétique de la Foi Catholique.*
D. T. C.—*Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique.*
H. P. R.—*Homiletic and Pastoral Review.*
J. T. S.—*Journal of Theological Studies.*
Prov. Deus.—*Encyclical,* "Providentissimus Deus."
P. G.—*Patrologia Graeca* (Migne).
P. L.—*Patrologia Latina* (Migne).
R. A.—*Revue Augustinienne.*
R. B.—*Revue Biblique.*
R. C. F.—*Revue du Clergé Français.*
Sp. Paraclitus—*Encyclical,* "Spiritus Paraclitus."
T. L. L.—*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae.*
Vigouroux, D. B.—*Dictionnaire de la Bible.*
Vigouroux, D. B. Suppl.—*Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplement.*

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INDEX

Adimantus, the Manichean, 3.
Aesop, fables of, 53.
Agrippinus, of Carthage, 70.
Allegory, 54-56.
Antioch, incident at, 38.
Apocryphal, writings, 69, 85.
Augustine, St., attitude towards deutero-canonical books, 87-97; towards science, 57, 61; Canon of Scripture, 65-70; concept of a canonical book, 71-76; criterion of canonicity, 74, 77-86; critical edition of his works, vii; doctor of the Church, xi; Scriptural ability and labors, xi-xiii; teaching on inerrancy of Scripture, 30-45; on existence and nature of inspiration, 3-28; on extent of inspiration, 29-57.
Authorship, twofold of Scripture, 18-20.

Bachiarius, the Monk, 86.
Bardenhewer, O., 24.
Barry, G. D., 87.
Bartolo, Salvatore di, 29.
Baruch, Book of, 66.
Benedict XV, 45.
Benedictine, edition of St. Augustine, vii.

Cain, builds a city, 47-48.
Canon: of Church and Jews, 74, 90, 91; official list of Scriptures, 73-74; rule of truth and faith, 75-76.
Canon of Scripture, use of expression by St. Augustine, 72-76.
Canonical, first use of term, 71; a technical term, 71.
Canonicity, criterion of, 74, 77-86.
Canticle of Canticles, an allegory, 54, 56.
Chaldeans, books of, 9.
Church, African, 69, 70, 73, 88, 89.
Church: authority over Scripture, 85; a norm of canonicity, 86.
Contradictions, in Scripture, apparent not real, 31.
Council: of Carthage, xi, xii, 68, 69, 94; of Florence, 16; of Hippo, 68, 94; Laodicea, 71; Numidia, xi, xii; Trent, 16, 78, 79; Vatican, 16.
Councils, African, 78.
Creation: narrative of, 47; six days of, 47.
Cunningham, J. C., 16.
Cyprian, St., 68, 70, 80.

Deutero-canonical, books, 66, 68, 84, 87-97.
Dictare, 13, 15, 16.
Dictation, verbal, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.
D'Hulst, Msgr., 29.
Donatists, 73.
Duntaxat, 91-94.

Ecclesiasticus, Book of, canonical, 88.
Egyptians, books of, 9.
Errors, of copyists, 37-38.
Esdras, books of, 66-67.
Esther, historical, 56.
Evangelists, knowledge of, 8.
Exsuperius, St., 69.

Faustus, the Manichean, 9, 32, 33, 82.
Fingers, of God, 15, 19.
Florence, Council of, 16.
Formulas, for quoting Scripture, 4, 5.
Forms, literary in Scripture, 52, 56.

Genealogies, antediluvian, 48.
Genesis, historical character and truth of, 46-49.
God; author of Scripture, 3, 5, 6; part of, in inspiration, 6-17.

Herod, cruelty of, 44.
History: absolute truth of, 45; in the Bible, 45, 46; law of, 45.
Honoratus, 4.
Horace, fables of, 53.
Howorth, H. H., 85.

Inerrancy, of Scripture: 30-45; a dogmatic principle, 31; a fundamental article of Christianity, 32.
Innocent, I, 69.
Inspiration: Augustine's concept of, 6-17; 27; consciousness of, by sacred writers, 23; fact of, 3; human activity under, 17-28; Mantic concept of, 22; of historical statements, 29.

Irenaeus, St., 80.

Jerome, St.: xi, xii, 33, 35, 84, 95, 96, 97; Augustine's controversy with, 38-41; opposition to the deutero-canonical books, 69, 71.
Jeremias, quoted as Zacharias, 34-37.
Jesus Sirach, authorship of, 67.
Job, historical, 56.
Jonah, and the whale, 55.
Judith, historical, 56.

Laodicea, Council of, 71.
Law and Prophets, 67.
Lenormant, F., 29.
Leo XIII, xii, 60.
Libellus Fidei, of Bachiarius, 86.
Lot, praised in Scripture, 44.

Man, part of, in inspiration, 17-28.
Mangenot, E., 79.
Manicheus, 6.
Manicheans, mistake of, 44.
Marcellinus, 6.
Marcion, 6.
Maxime canonicarum, 95-97.
McKeough, M. J., 47.
Metaphors, in Scripture, 54.
Migne, works of St. Augustine, vii.
Multiple sense, 23-27.
Mystic body, 14.

Numidia, Council of, xi, xii.

Oceanus, letter to, 41.
Old Testament: authority of, 67; meaning of term in ecclesiastical usage, 67; type of New Testament, 51.
Origen, 46.

Parables, of our Lord, 53.
Paul, St., formulas for quoting Scripture, 5.
Philo, 46.
Physical phenomena, described as they appear to the senses, 59.
Portalié, E., 23.
Providentissimus Deus, 60.
Psalms, meter in, 56.

Quotations, truth of in Scripture, 42, 43.

Revelation, 9, 10, 11.
Rivière, M. J., 36.
Rufinus, 84.

Schaff, P., vii.
Schanz, Paul, Christian Apology, 16, 18.
Science, Bible and, 57-62.
Scripture: attacks on truth and sanctity of, 44; faithful mirror, a, 43; handwriting of God, 15; letters from heaven, 15; no conflict between and science, 57-62.
Semi-Pelagian, Monks, 77-79.
Sense: allegorical, 49-52; literal and typical, 49-52; Multiple, 23-27; typical in St. Augustine's sermons, 51.
Sins, why recorded in Scripture, 43-45.
Speech, figures of, in Scripture, 54.
Spiritus Paraclitus, 45.
Stephen, St., sermon on, 71.

Talon, F., 24.
Tobias, Book of: canonical, 88; historical, 56.
Trent, Council of, 16, 78, 79.

Usage, ecclesiastical, a criterion of canonicity, 79.

Vatican, Council of, 16.
Vienna Academy, edition of, viii.
Vogels, H., 14, 27.
Veritas citationis, 42.
Veritas rei citatae, 42.
Vulgate, Latin, 79.

Wisdom, Book of, canonical, 77-81, 88.

Universitas Catholica Americae

Washingtonii, D. C.

S. Facultas Theologica, 1929–1930.
No. 33.

THESES

DEUS LUX MEA

THESES

QUAS

AD DOCTORATUM

IN

SACRA THEOLOGIA

APUD UNIVERSITATEM CATHOLICAM AMERICAE

CONSEQUENDUM

PUBLICE PROPUGNABIT

CAROLUS JOSEPH COSTELLO

SACERDOS CONGREGATIONIS

MISSIONARIORUM OBLATORUM MARIAE IMMACULATAE

S. THEOL. LICENTIATUS

THESES

1.

Revelation properly so called is not an essential element of divine inspiration.

2.

Inspiration does not exclude the use of documents or other natural means of information by the sacred writers.

3.

In order that God be truly the author of the Sacred Scriptures it was necessary that the initial impulse to write be given by God Himself.

4.

St. Augustine conceives inspiration as a twofold simultaneous action, that of God and man.

5.

In St. Augustine's concept of inspiration the divine influence is restricted in its operation, first of all, by the limitations of human nature itself, and then by the individual capabilities of the human authors.

6.

The "suggestion" which St. Augustine attributes to God in the act of inspiration is not to be understood in the sense of a verbal revelation.

7.

St. Augustine had no sympathy with a Mantic concept of inspiration, but represents the sacred authors as conscious instruments.

8.

Although St. Augustine is credited with teaching the existence of a multiple literal sense in Scripture, it is more probable that he believed in and taught the unity of the literal sense.

9.

The necessary result of divine inspiration is that the statements of the sacred writers are free from error.

10.

In defending the truth of Scripture quotations it is necessary to make a distinction between the "*veritas citationis*", and the "*veritas rei citatae*".

11.

The authority of St. Augustine may be justly cited in support of the historical character of Genesis, not only by reason of the high position which he enjoys as a Father of the Church, but also because of the long period of years which he devoted to the study of the first three chapters of Genesis.

12.

There is a literal and typical sense in Scripture, but the correct method of exegesis is that which recognizes the literal truth first, and then seeks out the typical meaning.

13.

Parables as a literary form are consistent with divine inspiration.

14.

Relative truth may be admitted in the statements of Scripture bearing on physical phenomena. Absolute truth alone, however, is to be admitted for the historical statements of the Bible.

15.

The Fathers of the African Church in giving their decree on the canonical Scriptures were in a position to speak as representatives of ecclesiastical tradition.

16.

St. Augustine's criterion of canonicity consists in the acceptance of the books of Scripture as divine in apostolic times, and in their subsequent unbroken transmission and use as such in the Church.

17.

Those passages of St. Augustine's writings which have been cited by some to show that he distinguished the books of the Old Testament into two groups, namely, 1. books which are both divine and canonical, 2. books which are divine but not canonical, if correctly understood, reveal no such distinction.

18.

In view of the testimony from Jewish and Christian sources, David is rightly considered the author of Psalm II.

19.

In Psalm II, v. 7, the word " son " is to be taken literally. Consequently it is here asserted that the Messias is the real and not the figurative son of God.

20.

The parallelism of Hebrew poetry requires that the words of Psalm 31, v. 1, " whose sins are covered ", be interpreted in the sense of whose sins are wiped out or effaced.

21.

The historical reality and credibility of Christ's miracles are guaranteed by the soundest arguments based on textual criticism, the character of the Evangelists, and the miracles considered in themselves.

22.

The numerical symbolism of the number fourteen explains why St. Matthew arranged the members of his genealogy into three groups of fourteen.

23.

Matthew I, 16, despite the seemingly contrary reading of Syrus Sinaiticus, refers to the supernatural birth of Christ.

24.

The brethren of Christ spoken of in Mt. XII, 46-47, are not his real brothers, but near relatives.

25.

An examination of the first Gospel shows that the author was a Christian of Jewish origin, and that he wrote his Gospel for the Jewish Christians of Palestine.

26.

The temptation of Christ, Mt. IV, 1-11, was not a subjective illusion, but an external reality.

27.

St. Matthew's Gospel is the first in chronological order, and was written before the destruction of Jerusalem.

28.

The Canticle of the Magnificat (Luke I, 46-55), is not entirely original in thought, but shows a dependence on the Canticle of Anna (I Sam. II, 1-10).

29.

The historicity of Christ is demonstrated by non-biblical sources as well as by the Gospels.

30.

External and internal evidence unite in pointing out St. Luke as the author of the Acts of the Apostles.

31.

It is most probable that St. Irenaeus (Haer. 3, 22) gives the true interpretation of the genealogy of Our Lord in St. Luke's Gospel.

32.

Throughout his life St. Augustine is consistent in attributing the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews to St. Paul.

33..

Spiritus Sanctus non solum a Patre, sed etiam a Filio vere procedit.

34.

Humana Christi natura, quatenus hypostatice Verbo conjuncta, una et eadem adoratione cum eodem Verbo est colenda.

35.

Homo lapsus non potest, etiam physice, sine gratia vere supernaturali elicere actus supernaturales ad justificationem praeparatorios.

36.

Poenitentia est sacramentum Novi Testamenti a Christo institutum.

37.

Beata Virgo Maria, in primo instanti suae conceptionis, intuitu meritorum Christi, fuit ab omni originalis culpae labe praeservata immunis.

38.

Fide catholica tenendum est Beatam Mariam permansisse virginem ante partum, in partu, et post partum.

39.

Existit purgatorium in quo justorum animae nondum plene expiatae, poenis mundantur.

40.

Ex virtute pietatis liberi tenentur exhibere parentibus amorem, reverentiam, et oboedientiam.

41.

Ex virtute pietatis, ipso jure naturae, parentes gravissima obligatione tenentur prolis educationem, tum religiosam et moralem, tum physicam et civilem pro viribus curandi, et etiam temporali bono providendi.

42.

Ex lege naturali jus et obligatio providendi educationi prolis ad parentes primario pertinet.

43.

Auctoritas publica eaque sola jus habet occidendi malefactores, quatenus id ad bonum commune necessarium est.

44.

Licet unicuique defendere tum propriam tum aliorum vitam etiam cum occisione injusti aggressoris, servato tamen moderamine inculpatae tutelae.

45.

Norma moralitatis est Deus ultimus finis; norma obligationis est Deus supremus Legislator.

46.

Gloria Dei externa est hominis primarius finis, beatitudo perfecta est hominis secundarius.

47.

Can. 901-907. De subjecto sacramenti poenitentiae.

48.

Can. 908-910. De loco ad confessiones excipiendas.

49.

Can. 911-920. De indulgentiarum concessione.

50.

Can. 925-936. De indulgentiis acquirendis.

51.

Can. 938-939. De ministro extremae unctionis.

52.

Can. 940-944. De subjecto extremae unctionis.

53.

Can. 945-947. De ritibus et caeremoniis extremae unctionis.

54.

Constantine's edict of toleration may be looked on in the light of a definite revision of the Roman Constitution on the subject of religious freedom.

55.

Pope St. Gregory is justly called "Great" by reason of his great practical ability and his high apostolic aims.

56.

The political anarchy prevalent in Italy during the second half of the thirteenth century justified the removal of the papal residence from Rome to Avignon.

57.

The hostility of Philip the Fair, founded largely on cupidity, was the major influence in the suppression of the Templars.

58.

An attitude of deference to the policies of the French court compromised the universal character of the papacy.

59.

The Avignon Popes were zealous in their extirpation of heresy, and in promoting the reform of religious orders, and in spreading the Gospel to foreign lands.

60.

Pope Urban VI appears to have been legitimately elected Pope, April 8, 1378, although the disorders attending his election were later seized as a pretext for annulling it.

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Charles Joseph Costello was born Nov. 8, 1899, at Chelsea, Massachusetts. His primary education was received at St. Rose's Parochial School, Chelsea, Mass., and at the Greenwood Public School, Wakefield, Mass. His High School and Preparatory studies were pursued at Holy Angels Apostolic School, Buffalo, N. Y. In Sept. 1918, he entered the Novitiate of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate at Tewksbury, Mass., and in the following Sept. began his philosophical and theological studies at the Oblate Scholasticate, Washington, D. C. He was ordained to the priesthood June 17, 1925, at Washington, D. C. He entered the School of Sacred Sciences at the Catholic University of America Oct. 1925, taking for his major subject the study of Old Testament Scripture. He received the degrees of S.T.B. and S.T.L. at the Catholic University of America in 1926 and 1927 respectively.

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